

RESEARCH ARTICLE	The Systemic Implications in Narrative Discourse: Frankenstein in Baghdad as a Case Study	
Ziane Djaaroun	Dr.	
	Akli Mohand Oulhadj University of Bouira	
	Algeria	
	Email: z.djaaroun@univ-bouira.dz	
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Abstract		
<p>This study seeks to approach narrative discourse from the perspective of cultural criticism by analyzing Frankenstein in Baghdad by Ahmed Saadawi, in order to uncover the implicit cultural systems embedded within its deep structure. The study is based on the hypothesis that narrative texts are not produced solely within an aesthetic framework, but also express cultural, social, religious, and political systems underlying their surface structure. Its objective is to demonstrate the applicability of cultural criticism tools to the modern Arabic novel and to assess the extent to which Arab critical approaches have benefited from Western achievements in this field. The study concludes that Frankenstein in Baghdad serves as a narrative model rich in cultural systems that reflect the fragmentation of Iraqi identity and the transformations of post-occupation society. The analysis also highlights the capacity of cultural criticism to penetrate the rhetorical and aesthetic layers of the text to uncover the intellectual and ideological structures that shape it.</p>		
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Introduction

The aesthetic characterization of literature—primarily shaped by imagery reliant on rhetorical expression—is no longer a central requirement in the critical process, especially in light of the pursuit of what lies beyond stylization and artistic form in literary texts. Cultural approaches have thus emerged in an effort to move beyond aesthetics toward uncovering the implicit cultural dimensions embedded within discourse in general, and narrative discourse in particular.

Amid this scientific convergence—stemming from accumulated knowledge, historical developments, and sociocultural dynamics—we are faced with both constants and variables that reveal a fragmentation of the linguistic system into structures that transcend mere language form. This necessitates an exploration of the nature of this transformation and an inquiry into what makes it a critical endeavor that requires an interpretive lens capable of penetrating beyond the surface of language. Language, while being the original, stable system, is also the foundation for the existence of other systems.

This calls for the mobilization of various critical approaches to describe, analyze, and interpret these creative spaces within the realm of literary works. The inquiry is thus framed by a problematic perspective that defines the framework and methodology of the research, beginning with this central question: **How are cultural systems manifested in narrative discourse?**

1- Key Concepts

1.1 The Cultural System By cultural discourse, we mean the concepts and practices that concern cultural affairs and are directly connected to various and diverse segments of society. These practices aim to shape both individuals and society in alignment with the society's intellectual, cultural, religious, and linguistic references—whether on a material, spiritual, methodological, or value-based level.

For this reason, the American critic Vincent Leitch considers cultural criticism as: *"An activity that regularly examines and questions subjects, events, and practices... employing linguistic, ethical, economic, political, historical, philosophical, legal, educational, familial, and religious perspectives, along with aesthetic and class-based beliefs and the representations active in cultural works and their activities."* (Vincent B. Leitch, 2002, p. 28)

It calls for moving beyond conventional critical methods and searching for a new approach that may encompass them all, due to its comprehensive nature. Cultural criticism is an intellectual activity that draws its vitality from culture as an all-encompassing concept. This intellectual activity, by necessity, imposes its multiple mechanisms and resides within the broader culture, which branches into various pathways and extensions that touch on political and social issues. It does not engage with the text from an aesthetic or suggestive angle; rather, it searches for implicit cultural structures, as it views literature as an implicitly cultural phenomenon. Hence, its concern lies not in revealing the aesthetic, as is the case with literary criticism, but in uncovering what lies hidden beneath rhetorical and aesthetic masks. (Abdullah, 2005, p. 84) The cultural critic does not stop at examining appearances or evaluating aesthetics alone but strives to discover the latent dimensions of works that carry aesthetic impact.

This form of criticism does not seek what makes literature beautiful or moving, nor does it concern itself with texts in terms of their aesthetic form, linguistic structures, or symbolic connotations. Rather, it investigates what is reflected through the various and diverse contexts surrounding the text. With this perspective, literature transforms from a text that proclaims its aesthetic value into an implicit cultural system. Cultural criticism does not view linguistic structures as aesthetic breakthroughs or decorative constructions; instead, it sees them as laden with meanings and hidden implications that have seeped in from social, historical, political, and economic contexts. Thus, these structures become resources for the cultural critic, who traces their paths to uncover their underlying systems. In this way, the features of this approach become clear: it is multidisciplinary, builds upon history, delves into cultural systems and structures, and treats the creative work as a medium for understanding what is hidden in linguistic, literary, and aesthetic unconsciousness. As such, it represents a critical trend that seeks to utilize the insights of modern and contemporary criticism to analyze literary texts and discourses.

1-2 The Social Code

Cultural criticism studies the contextual frameworks accompanying society, as these shape the intellectual foundations and character traits of the writer. For example, the issue of identity is a fundamental one that cultural criticism analyzes; it engages with language and its aesthetics to uncover what lies beneath—what contributes to shaping identity. Identity, in turn, reveals the image of society hidden behind the self that produces discourse. Language is central to this process. According to Wittgenstein, language is “a form of social life and a type of social practice through which several desired objectives are achieved.” For him, language consists of a set of linguistic actions performed by individuals, which he refers to as “language games”—a complete system of human communication. (Nizar, September 2000, p. 398) This form is one of the most significant ways in which a person's conformity to society is manifested. The nature of this conformity is determined by the communicative language that binds individuals to one another, shaped by the social connections formed between speaker and listener. This explains why many people refer to words without considering their social context or the conditions under which they are chosen. Through language; individuals define their roles, temperaments, attitudes, thoughts, speech, and writing. All of these elements carry the accumulated experiences of a specific group, because culture is “the framework through which the personal and individual experiences of a given group in a particular era are organized.” (Bouchaib, p. 19) Thus, these social codes convey the image of society in its entirety—both its center and its margins.

This system, with all the changes it carries, was presented by Yuri Lotman as having “become indicative of the history of culture, literature, and social thought in general.” (Diaa, 2005, p. 22) It is rooted in language, which is of paramount importance to individuals within society, for “it is language that organizes the experience of this society, and it is language that consequently shapes its world and its concrete reality. Every language embodies a particular worldview.” Thus, language produces meaningful signs linked to the mind, whose structure has been formed within a specific social system. Through this, language conveys to us a distinct vision of the world and of life.

1-3 the Religious Code:

Religion shares with culture a fundamental value and importance in shaping human identity, for they are “twin entities in resemblance.” (William & Anwar, 2011, p. 25) Both direct our inner selves and compel individuals to adopt a set of ideas and behaviors that distinguish them from others who differ in religion and culture. Therefore, it is essential to touch upon the concept of “religion” to understand its underlying codes and its role in shaping the personality and language of the writer, especially as religion seeks to regulate people’s behavior through beliefs that define the relationship between human and deity, offering various rituals and acts of worship. Religion permeates all aspects of life and also influences the creative self when it absorbs the essence of a given creed, ritual, or worship practice. Religion does not stray far from language. In our heritage, when Abu Ja’far Al-Mansur asked a servant of Hisham ibn Abd al-Malik about his identity, the servant responded: “If Arabic is a tongue, we have spoken it; and if it is a religion, we have entered into it.” Here, language transforms into a broader meaning, almost synonymous with what religion embodies—it becomes imbued with the customs and morals of its people. Simultaneously, language becomes an important medium for transmitting that religion. This is precisely what aesthetic language achieves: metaphor does not depart from the frameworks of religion.

1-4 the Political Code:

Politics plays a significant role in people's lives and occupies a wide segment of them through political change or political projects, which are considered an essential element of culture and one of its core components. This is because “cultural codes are systems (systèmes) embedded in every culture... and these systems encompass all aspects of life: race, religion, social customs, political constraints, literary and class traditions, and power relations.” (Diaa, 2005, p. 22)

Political systems work to produce literature that aligns with the center, seeking out texts that support their policies while opposing and marginalizing those that fall outside their ideological framework. In contrast, this exclusion also contributes—by opposition—to the production of texts that challenge or resist political authority. Political discourse, directed toward shaping the masses, often becomes an unconscious discourse, exploiting language and its figurative shifts to create a power base that supports and legitimizes its agenda. As such, political discourse “does not lie in the words themselves, but in the unconscious awareness evoked through those words.” Understanding political texts, then, depends not solely on the language itself but inevitably on shared awareness and the embedded cultural codes that frame interpretation—going beyond vocabulary and grammatical structures.

The text, with its cultural load, imposes a specific framework for constructing an ideology that may be contrary to that of the recipient. In such a case, “*the most useful procedure is to explore how the signifying systems of a literary text produce specific ideological effects.*” (Terry, 1997, p. 179) This statement offers a procedural perspective on the extent of influence a literary text can exert through the consciousness embedded in its language—particularly its linguistic structures. The recipient may be subjected, through language, to cultural implications that lead them to accept a particular political behavior or determine their stance on a given issue. Thus, the text becomes a rhetorical instrument. The literature of the center transmits, through aesthetic means, arguments and evidence that confer legitimacy upon the political behavior desired by the ruling system. Conversely, the opposing subject works to construct alternative political systems that deviate from the center.

This is evident, for example, in exile literature. The exiled writer, having distanced himself from the center, begins to create marginal literature. It is: “*a cultural phenomenon whose presence has grown in the literatures of nations that have undergone the colonial experience. Narrative writing forms its essential core, and it overflows with obsessive desires of longing, nostalgia, and anxiety, haunted by the idea of rediscovering the individual’s place in both homeland and exile alike.*” The political systems of the alienated self often oscillate between anxiety, nostalgia, and a sense of exile experienced both within and outside the homeland. Alongside these systems, other frameworks may also play a significant role in guiding the narrative, which we will address in their respective contexts. Thus, exploring the cultural systems in the Arab novel is essentially an inquiry into the Arab individual’s struggles, dreams, aspirations, and the intellectual and ideological backgrounds underpinning them.

And: “*One of the features of the novel is that many systems (or codes) take shape and intersect within it—not in isolation, but rather in their interrelation—on the basis that artistic works do not express a single, isolated system.*” Within the novel, multiple conflicts and groupings converge to create the idea of conflict, embodied in various systems (social, political, or religious). Any narrative form has roots in deep structure, and we cannot ignore the fact that: “*Language is the tool through which the elements of the novel are constructed; through it we come to know the characters, their levels of thinking, their preoccupations with life’s concerns, and the environment in which events unfold.*” (Bouchaib, May 6, 2022, p. 78) Language serves to transmit ideas and shape the reader’s awareness so they can understand the cultural systems that accompany the linguistic game. Language encircles the reader, drawing them toward integration with the environment in which the events are woven. With all its reach, language acts upon the space of the text, exerting control through its systems and offering the reader the opportunity to immerse themselves in the narrative, the description, the memories, and the visions.

2- The Implicit Systems in the Novel *Frankenstein in Baghdad*

2.1 The Social System in *Frankenstein in Baghdad*

Social systems are promoted and explored in their details with the aim of portraying Arab societies and their most pressing issues, along with their most significant implicit elements. *Frankenstein in Baghdad* by Ahmed Saadawi, which belongs to the horror genre, is rich in implicit meanings that work to influence the reader and ensnare them within its cultural systems.

Beginning with the title, *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, the author borrows the character of Frankenstein from the English novelist Mary Shelley, making it a universal intertextual reference whose events and consequences align with those of the novel.

- **The Dramatic Scenes:** Perhaps the most expressive and dramatic scene reflecting the events of Arab societies—particularly the Iraqi scene—is the bombing scene, which places us in a deeply dramatic image that becomes even more pronounced during the period of American occupation in Iraq. After the hotel bombing and the death of Hadi's friend Hasib, the following linguistic structures convey the tragedies of the Iraqi people and illustrate a large part of the Iraqi imagination during that bleak period:

"They all fall asleep after the exhaustion of crying and dream of Hasib, walking with a canvas bag on his shoulder, returning home. Each family member dreams something about Hasib; the dreams come together and forgive one another—some compensating for the others. A small dream fills a gap in a larger one. The threads of dreams intertwine, forming anew a dream-body of Hasib that matches his soul, which still hovers above all their heads, seeking rest and not finding it." (Ahmed, 2001, p. 44) Hasib's death is nothing less than an explosion of multiple problems and the death of much of Iraq's human spirit. It marks the unleashing of social hatred and the entry into devastating crises. Hasib is not just a passing figure; within the novel, he transforms into something symbolic. His death signifies the collapse of familial ties and brotherhood in Iraq, and the beginning of its fragmentation. This scene leaves a wide gap between the Iraqi individual and a reality dominated by killing and bombings. This form demonstrates the link between language and the intended meaning.

Hasib – the Bond of Lineage

Death – the Destruction of Those Human Relationships

The choice of this name carries cultural dimensions that reflect the poet's internalized visions of his society. *Hasib / Death* serves as an explanatory duality for human relationships within the Iraqi context before and after the rise of terrorism.

This will create, in the subconscious of the Iraqi individual, a space where dreaming becomes the alphabet that fuses with their imagination. They find pleasure in re-creation and in discovering solutions—solutions driven by the implicit systems. The threads of dreams intertwine to recreate a dream-body, expressing a real and ongoing need to replace a miserable reality with a dream that interweaves to fill the space that everyone has agreed must be transformed. As it is stated: *"Layered stories are told by bereaved women—struck by the cruelty of time and the total absence of features that sink into memory and never return to life."* (Ahmed, 2001, p. 64) This clarifies the suffering experienced by that society, where bombings and killings are rampant, occurring without known time or place. This linguistic structure, and the total absence of features that submerge into memory, presents an image that answers many questions. It carries a cultural system that reveals the extent of the Iraqi society's devastation—one that has lost the features of its people due to the endless tragedies and disappearances imposed by time. Everyone has succumbed to forgetfulness in the face of such shock. The struggle is fierce, and the whirlwind of death reaps souls without letting people hold on to life or to those they love. Each person has come to live in a miniature universe built on clinging to survival and escaping reality. It is death: **"Death is the first concern in human history, and fear of it is the first fear known to the human heart."**

This tense present, burdened with fear, carries within it the equation of death and tragedy that surrounded the shattered self. From here, a choking breath rises, reflecting images of calamity that contributed to changing the perception of life and the helplessness before a collapsing human world.

The image of the woman who lost her son and *"refused to go with them because her heart told her that her son was not dead, and could not possibly have died in that way"* (Ahmed, 2001, p. 72)—this heart, personified, speaking, and searching, creates the first paradox between the death that struck Iraq and what America claimed to bring in the name of democracy.

This is closely related to the idea of forming an incompatible government that contributed to expanding the cycle of revenge. The following pairing illustrates the relationship between names and political entities:

The Attak (scavenger) – Iraq

The Abomination – The Government

The “‘attāk” (scavenger) wants to repair what terrorism has destroyed through this abomination, while Iraq’s rulers have created a torn government that devours itself from within, yet they want it to repair the political, social, and cultural situation. This exhausting entanglement between the ‘attāk—who has taken the place of Iraq—and its politicians reflects the contradiction.

- **Revenge:** Revenge is the attempt to create parallels and intersections between the wounded self and the drive that compels Iraqis to envision a solution that would quench their thirst for justice. Perhaps this solution would be a miracle capable of bringing an end to the heinous acts plaguing the country. Through the ‘attāk, the novelist opens a horizon thick with the scent of death, amid clouds of smoke, darkness, and death. Corpses are transformed into the birth of an epic that attempts to restore what security forces, sectarian imams, or politicians failed to achieve:

“The *shisma* is made from the remains of victims’ bodies, infused with the spirit of one victim and the name of another. It is the essence of victims seeking revenge for their deaths so they may find peace.” (Ahmed, 2001, p. 144) The *shisma* is made from remains—thus, it is a confrontation between the dead who seek revenge and a killer who doesn’t even know his victims. It is a declaration from the novelist about the deteriorating situation in Iraq, dominated by scenes of vengeance and the absence of security. These fragmented body parts unite to become a specter bearing the weapon of revenge, obsessed with interpreting what is happening on the ground and transforming a reality burdened by an unprecedented loss of life, brutal violence, and a hybrid war of sects, parties, and a Western—specifically American—entity claiming to bring freedom. It is a true tragedy. The metaphor of “*victims seeking revenge*” reveals the depths to which Iraq has fallen.

The *shisma* is woven from the victims—it is a word borrowed from the Iraqi dialect, referring to “the one without a name.” There is a unity between the term, which resonates with the common person’s mind, and what the novelist seeks to construct in the imagination of the ordinary individual. Northrop Frye says: “When we think in words, only metaphor can express in language the meaning of an energy shared by both subject and object.” (Salah, 2017, p. 283) The *shisma* represents an interweaving of the imaginary and the real, of presence and absence.

At times, the novel comes to define the very instrument that quenches the thirst of the victims’ families for justice, as they clutch their dreams and search for rest in some far corner. With remarkable artistic and aesthetic finesse, it seeks a composite form made from a multitude of victims, relying on this diversity to broaden the experience of revenge. The rise of crime has amplified anxiety and magnified fear—and the greatest driving force behind revenge is hatred:

“But it is the dormant energy of hatred that suddenly awakens toward an unsuitable person.” (Ahmed, 2001, p. 144)

This metaphor seems to interpret the widespread revenge in Iraq. The cause lies in the dormant hatred—a sleeping sedition stirred by those in power and positions of interest. Various social patterns merged to charge the atmosphere (revenge, hatred...), until seeking death itself became a form of salvation. Here, metaphor enters to illustrate this purpose, and it is this interconnection between metaphor and culture that reveals the depth of the individual’s subconscious:

“Metaphor is connected to the cultural and social existence in which the individual is born, and it is certain that society and culture cannot be viewed as separate from one another.” (Krans, 1973, p. 298) Thus, the culture of death, which seeped into the souls of ordinary citizens because of what is happening and what has happened, is unveiled through metaphor in all its magic and brilliance.

Death is the prominent circle, the result of two deeper circles within Iraqi society: the circle of those with influence, interests, and sectarianism, and the circle of hatred and revenge that was planted in the souls of the citizens. His talk about the beggars and their struggle that ended with their deaths, and their fighting, where:

“The two dead beggars became victims of a foolish act,” (Ahmed, 2001, p. 144)

confirms one thing: that foolish act is the spread of death and their search for it.

“Daniel was almost merely the reason for entering into their death, whose sweetness they tasted.” (Ahmed, 2001, p. 145)

This death has taken on a special sweetness and a pleasure sought by those who have lost their families and their support—their refuge. This savior summarized all the prayers of the victims’ families, as:

“The prayers of the victims and their families gathered at once and, with their loud momentum, pushed open those hidden doors; the bowels of darkness stirred and gave birth to me.” (Ahmed, 2001, p. 157)

Thus, the prayers of the innocent—old women, children, and the powerless—moved fate itself through their supplications.

This is an allusion to the fact that those people have completely lost trust in others, and this is a serious matter when a citizen loses confidence in those responsible for the nation. Even more dangerous is when they feel that the threat may come from those very people. It is as if the nights gave birth to someone who would stand for justice and against oppression, restoring people's rights. Thus, darkness in the metaphorical structure is awakened: "the bowels of darkness stirred and gave birth to me," indicating the power of darkness—the darkness of blind death, the darkness of widespread killing throughout the country. It gave birth to *al-Shismah* who will be the avenger and the claimant for the blood of the slain: "Retribution for the innocent who have no supporter except the stirrings of their souls calling to repel and stop death." (Ahmed, 2001, p. 157) These stirrings, in their metaphorical form, become a strong weapon against the pervasive death. The image thus shifts from depicting beauty to portraying humanity at its weakest moments: "The image is not merely a trace behind feeling, nor purely an aesthetic product of absolute imagination or a reality it portrays. No matter how realistically described, there is always something the image constructs in its own way if the choice of words includes a choice of stance." (Mohamed, 2003, p. 133) The novelist skillfully chose metaphors that express his stance and powerfully convey what he wants to depict.

- **The Press and the Lost Freedom:** Talking about the press during a time of crisis is essentially talking about the loss of trust and the tightening noose, especially around the press that opposes the authority and its officials. We mentioned earlier the dramatic nature of the Iraqi scene in general, which inevitably affects the press: "He read Al-Suwadi's article twice and felt it contained confidential information that should not have been disclosed except with the approval of the Follow-up and Prosecution Department. But what can be done for press freedom that suddenly descended upon the country?" (Ahmed, 2001, p. 154)

The phrase "*suddenly descended upon the country*" is a metaphor. The country, which has fallen into the clutches of corruption and become hostage to the Follow-up and Prosecution Department representing the security apparatus, is essentially a completely besieged world—fallen into the whirlpools of sectarianism, the American invasion, conflict, discord, and rejection. The press in such an environment is under the authority of a predatory military. The condition of the press is portrayed with precision, and the metaphor "*suddenly descended upon the country*" reveals the absence of opinion and counter-opinion, and the lack of freedom of expression. The word "*suddenly*" signals that something has changed; it hints that Iraqis had never really known press freedom until new circumstances arrived—namely, the arrival of the Americans. However, the truth is otherwise: the Western world sees no freedom of the press except when it serves its interests. Al-Safir newspaper, in an article titled (*Marketing Illusion: Collusion... The Press in Wars*), quotes Steve Rendall, a writer for FAIRNESS & ACCURACY IN REPORTING, a watchdog group critical of bias in American media. In John Pilger's documentary *The War You Don't See*, Rendall explains that Charles Hanley's report debunking all the illusions presented by Colin Powell reached all major newsrooms in the United States, all of which have access to the Associated Press where Hanley is a correspondent. Yet no one cared about the report because it "*didn't fit the scenario*" at the time—the scenario that said the war was inevitable. This excerpt paints a picture of American administrative blindness toward anything that opposes its policy toward allied countries. Despite Colin Powell's lies and illusions about Iraq possessing weapons of mass destruction, and despite numerous reports disproving this, America continued to believe the falsehoods. The greatest disaster came after: "*the illusion sold by George Bush and Tony Blair to Americans, the British, and the world alike was exposed, yet Western media and press persisted in their biased role and fabricated media coverage of events.*" (Mizir, March 26, 2022) They kept pumping vast amounts of lies that led them to invade Iraq, dismantle the modern state, and replace it with weak, deteriorated governments obedient to America and the West.

2-2 The Religious Discourse in *Frankenstein in Baghdad*: It becomes clear that Ahmed Saadawi, in his use of a persuasive approach, targets a specific element: religion, considered the fundamental factor underlying each sect or denomination's program for victory. Each sect desires the triumph of its own party's and followers' values, while forgetting that this ultimately aims to fragment the Iraqi social fabric. Through the religious discourses he depicts, Ahmed Saadawi seeks to formulate a convincing plan for this argument, linking his limited understanding with the fractured expanse of his homeland. There is a connection between the novel and the pursuit of unity: the discourse it presents contains a cultural system deeply rooted in the nation. It demands that each faction adopt the entire set of ideas of the other without scrutiny or clarification simply because it sees them as religion: "*Sectarianism in Iraq is considered one of the main obstacles standing in the way of social cohesion and national consensus.*" (Mizir, March 26, 2022) Sectarianism has produced religious frameworks and altered the idea of religion for its own benefit, giving rise to leadership figures who deepen the crisis and seek safe havens outside the lands they once inhabited. The narrator sees that these migrations have generated negative repercussions on the

fragile Iraqi society, reflected in the Iraqi individual who now lives through a religious crisis no less dangerous than the crime of murder.

We find many examples of this: *"Perhaps the most prominent example is the massacres and sectarian events that devastated the Iraqi people after 2006, and the fighting that took place in several areas involving purges, revenge, and disputes resulting from sectarian incitement."*(Abathar, 2020, p. 184)

The process of retaliation becomes an achievement of religious awareness against the other. Instead of fostering communication with the other and creating a space for tolerance and integration, they sought division, more bloodshed, killing, and displacement.

The religious discourse in *Frankenstein in Baghdad* conveys to us the extent to which the general population is immersed in a rhetoric of division and non-recognition of the other, which leads to overlooking the truth and pursuing illusory victories and terrorist bombings.

The cultural and religious frameworks hidden behind language clearly emerge in the novel *Frankenstein in Baghdad*. The author relies on them because of their deep significance. Delving into the structures transports you to the religious values that have shaped the mindset of the Arab individual. The foundation of the frameworks in this novel is to depict the miserable state into which religion, as we knew it—a unifying force for people—has fallen, having been hijacked by sectarianism. Sectarianism transformed religion into a means of communication that created imaginary spaces contributing to exposing the sectarian scene: *"This is evidence of a shift in the value system, as the concept of citizenship changed to depend on identity and belonging rather than on culture, civilization, and civility."*(Abathar, 2020, p. 187)

Thus, a dangerous illusion emerged, spreading and controlling people's minds, building groups and factions based purely on religion and sect, disregarding the idea of citizenship or culture. Themes intertwined at the level of metaphorical structure and its interactions reveal the extent of this transformation in the citizenship system. This metaphorical interaction serves as a revelation of the voice of marginalized classes within the apparatus of power and also within systems of conflict.

After this journey of research, in which I attempted to trace the implicit meanings of Arab narrative—especially that revolving around the novel because of its closeness to the Arab human experience, as found in *Frankenstein in Baghdad*—it can be said that I have reached a set of conclusions, the most concise of which I summarize in the following...

Conclusion

Analyzing the novel *Frankenstein in Baghdad* from the perspective of cultural criticism opens new horizons for understanding the literary text as a mirror reflecting the social, political, and cultural complexities experienced by society. The study showed that the text is not limited to being merely an aesthetic narrative but rather constitutes an interactive field where multiple frameworks harmonize to form a critical vision that transcends form and reaches deep content.

The study also emphasized the importance of adopting critical approaches that go beyond traditional aesthetics and pay greater attention to cultural and structural data in reading texts, thereby enhancing our understanding of social interactions and shifting identities. In this context, developing Arab literary criticism to include these dimensions is a necessary step to keep pace with global critical developments and to benefit from Western critical heritage in renewing our analytical tools in a way that aligns with the specificities of the modern Arabic text.

In the end, the literary text remains a fertile field for continued research and study, opening before us multiple horizons for understanding societies and history through a renewed cultural critical perspective.

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