

## **Reconsideration the Corpse: An Aesthetic of Utopia in Ahmed Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad***

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### **Abstract**

Monsters throughout history are always explained in terms of abjection, horror and something to be avoided in order that the system and regulation of society to be restored. Following the dynamic conception of contemporary utopia, the present paper aims at analyzing the monster or the violence in Ahmed Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad* (FB) 2014 in terms of utopian site of hope, freedom and justice. It intends to show in what ways the issue of the "neo-Utopianism" or a desire for grand narratives is addressed in contemporary Iraqi fiction and why this issue is significant in post- postmodern thought. The paper revolves around post-traditional thinking of monster through investigating how a monster is related to a collective desire of hope for better roles in relation to the multiple societal crises. Other than an abject or "Other", the value of creating such a monster is to introduce a new vision to the reader accomplished with the hope and salvation instead of the fragile spirit that comes from the postmodern failure and destruction. Within this conception the paper unfolds three routes that explicitly address a utopian desire: the body, the name and the aim or the message. The article, moreover, uncovers a new dimension of monstrosity in Iraqi literature which marks a shift from postmodernism to new era characterized by a utopian revival. The paper concludes that the monster is given a new voice and vision to be accepted in symbolic order unlike its traditional image in Gothic literature, one to speak about horror or monstrosity.

**Key words:** abjection, neo- utopia, post- postmodernism, Otherness, symbolic order

## Introduction

Half a millennium since Thomas More in his 1516 fictional book *Utopia* coined the term “utopia” to describe an imaginary land . for More it is “elsewhere” and “elsewhen” which is not possible to be achieved on earth. The term is also synonym with imagination, idealism, fanciful, or sometimes even with negative connotation such as dictatorship. In contemporary philosophy the term “utopia” has been used differently and specifically. It no longer means a face of perfection or an idealism, rather it is a sense of change and an alternative that longs for replacement of one condition for one better. In other words, the politics of utopia is being revolutionized for challenge and reformation instead of perfection. It has moved recently to more practical and fruitful way of living.

Searching for an alternative or difference in a society, utopia becomes a recurrent discourse and narratives of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Gothic fiction. The utopian hope of radical social transformation is felt in contemporary artists and writers who believe that art is a basic project of making the world better. The utopian impulse or aspiration is to imagine an alternative better society, as it is deeply connected with dreams and fantasies, where individual expresses her/ his dissatisfaction with the present. Art and literature thus are the dreams and fantasies that offer a satisfaction for the masses of a better future. contemporary Utopia is also about how society functioning under certain situations to fulfill its desires (Sarakemsky,1993). Utopian imagination is usually connected with present and future, and the ability to criticize the dissatisfaction with the present is its strength and that utopian scheme always has a critical definition that associates with the first leading desire to hope and change. This utopian scheme has the capacity to modify emotions to let people involve with hope and better future.( Levitas, 2014)

So, the present paper discusses different ways in which such alternative world or society is imagined through the eyes of a mythical monster, having made it paradoxically possible for the monster to bring meaning and justice back to life. This may go against postmodern antirealism as Ramón Saldivar (2011) makes it clear in his article “Speculative Realism and the Postrace Aesthetic in Contemporary American Fiction” that

“Postmodernism has proven to be simply too distantly removed from the real world of justice and injustice.”(p. 519)

Recently, critics have agreed that contemporary art and literature moved beyond what is called postmodern dystopia to embrace a new era which is marked by a utopian and romance revival. Reading post- postmodern Gothic fiction such as Charlaine Harris’s *Southern Vampire* series (2001-2014), Isaac Marion’s *Warm Bodies*(2013), S. G. Brown’s *Breathers* (2009), Ahmed Sadaawi’s *Frankenstein in Baghdad*(2014) and BBC drama *Being Human*(2008), reveal much about the nature and the ideological shift of horror representation. It is such an era that calls for what the American cultural theorist Eric Gans, believes in the end of “de jure discrimination”, in which the abject or the physical deformed body is no longer an indication of reality. The main issue for those critics is that the moral mode shapes the character and content instead of physical features. Consequently, contemporary fiction passes beyond postmodern irony, mysticism and dystopia, bringing instead understanding, dialogue and utopian positive thinking. In the postmodern era, an essential reason for utopia not receiving much attention is its connotation with totalitarianism that forced people into predesigned patterns. The questioning of the validity of the postmodern cultural practices, especially the grand narratives, ironically generates a sense of purpose and encouragement to move beyond and ahead leaving what Vermeulen and Akker called postmodern dystopia to embrace a new era of neo- romanticism. So the utopian characteristics are increasingly recognized in recent works of arts that distinguish from the postmodern narrative.

As an example of Gothic figure transformation in Post- postmodern thought, the monster Frankenstein expresses, though indirectly, a positive step beyond that postmodern irony and cynicism. The plot of the novel *FB* revolves around how Iraqis respond to the current situation of aftermath. The monster is being created to describe the self-destruction and the absurdity of Iraqi life. However, another face of the same coin is also introduced by the same tool of horror. This time the monster is a utopian body of desire and a positive force of the only justice in absurdist society. The present paper, therefore, examines the monster not in terms of fragmentation or abject, rather as a utopian collective desire.

### Statement of the problem

Monster as an “Other” is strangely integral into contemporary fiction in such a way that traditional purposes of monsters to mock, to signify cultural anxieties or threats have been abandoned and replaced by love, tolerance and sincerity. In literature, this new politics of the monster that reflect the postmillennial culture and society, cannot be explained in the existing traditional theories of “Otherness” such as abjection and uncanniness. The observable problem in those traditional theories is mainly related to the investigation of Gothic figures as a source of horror or something to be afraid of, and therefore, they cast off to the margins of society.

A question, therefore may be rise that, in what way the monster in Saadawi’s *FB*, if it is not fitted with traditional theories of uncanniness and abjection, is represented or signified. To put it simply, if the monster in *FB* is no longer a code of horror or social anxiety, then what does it exemplify? The present paper attempts to explain the shift in monstrosity in terms of utopia rather than that of horror, to cop the significant shift in cultural thinking, in which the deformed body is no longer seen as an absolute “Other”, rather is a site of hope and utopian imagination.

### The importance of the study

Contemporary, Gothic culture invades not only literature, but other cultural practices such as media, internet, fashion, film and advertisements, that is why in literature, Gothic theme has become and proved to be an important literary subgenre. The significance of the present paper lies in its specific understanding of horror in which the monster is not being analyzed as a means of horror, rather it is a collective desire of people( Iraqi people after US invasion). By applying the post-postmodern approach, a new reading of Ahmed Saadawi’s *FB* is emerged. This new reading essentializes the difference between monster’s traditional stereotype and its contemporary image. The findings, then, participate in pluralizing and expanding the current existing Gothic literature criticism. For further studies, moreover, the study paves the way for applying the same approach to study other Gothic figures such as vampire and zombie.

## Methodology

Following the shift in contemporary monstrous representation, the paper examines the addressed novel *FB* as it best illustrates the ideological and cultural transformation of the monster in the Gothic literature. This transformation is an indication to move towards new era of Post-postmodernism among its main characteristics is the revival of utopianism. The evidences in the shift of monster's representation are collected by a close reading of the text and then those evidences are read, firstly in the light of neo-utopianism ,This post-postmodern reading of the text gives a positive voice for marginal voices and "Otherness".

## Discussion

In what follows, the discussion will be focused on the monstrous representation, along with the utopian perspectives in *FB*. Generally, the central plot of the novel, focusing on the monster, explores the despair which is produced by the current situations of Iraq aftermath and the possible response to it. The story opens with a tragedy and fragmentation of people and things resulted from a suicide bombing-car in Al-Taiaran Square in Baghdad. This absurd and chaotic context of the Iraqi everyday life is best described as a "Waste Land" that indicates a playful meaning of life. As a consequence of this situation and as a psychological and social defense, people imagine a savior or "Godot" to pick them up out of the ditch, and since "Godot" will not come, a mythical creature is created to challenge the absurdity and to give hope for desperate people. In the wake of those deaths, Hadi Al- Attak, a junk peddler, appears in the scenery to build a "grand narrative" out of those destruction and fragmentation. Hadi who used to repair the broken things is trying to fix the Iraqi dead bodies into one entity bestowing them life and meaning. He collects the fragmented bodies with different ethnicities, tribes and identities in one creature to rebuild the old with new reality.

Hadi's new creature, Frankenstein, is more than a monster. It is an amalgamation of many innocent victims who had been killed by terrorism and sectarian violence. Hadi's stitched monster does not have an individual identity as the monster is composed of different parts that belong to different people with different sects and religions. Saadawi introduces the

monster as a collective desire to abandon fragmentation and motivate people to go out of their differences, saying “No” for fragmentation and sectarian violence. The necessity for continuity and complementarity is then by transcending the sense of totality.

*FB*, moreover, brings the fundamental stylistic and thematic elements of the contemporary utopian as it engages with the questions of identity in which the monster is a metaphor for the fragmented identity comes together to form a collection existing in one corpse. The collective and unified identities of Iraqis are only imagined by the supernatural monster to form a collective desire for social and political change. The monster is a structural pluralism in which the three components of form, content and purpose are amalgamated in different and societal unique ways. The main function of that monster is to criticize and change the current situation for better. The monster is referred to as “whatsitsname” which means that the monster without a name that may refer to one sect or religion or even a class<sup>1</sup>. Paradoxically, the corpse is formed by collecting parts of innocent victims who represent all Iraqi sects and an incarnation of a pure soul of security guard who devoted himself to defend people and was killed by a suicide bombing car- Haseeb Mohammad Jaafer. In this way the body is a site of utopian imagination to bring all people together in one body with a pure guard’s soul. So there is no difference between master and slave, Sunnis and Shiites, Muslim and Christian. As Saadawi observes that Iraqi society needs to be reshaped because “[w]e have extraordinary and beautiful people here.”(Najjar, 2015) The message, Saadawi introduced, is that the Iraqis are still able to think about change in the midst of despair and agony. The monster with all its paradoxes and ambiguities, has been given a utopian voice, content and name that bring people together. So, demoting “Whatsitsname” to the state of abjection causes a problem, because the body is a sacred, formed from Iraqi innocent victims, and thus their bodies are sacred. Accepting “Whatsitsname’s” sacredness means the admission of its social significance which is a crucial premise that the monster being recognized. Given this function, “Whatsitsname” is no longer the ‘Other’ and it is easily elevates itself from what Jeffery Jerome Cohen(1997)

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<sup>1</sup> In Iraqi culture a name usually distinguishes the individual’s sect and religion, for example x for Shiite, y for Sunni and z for Christian. To serve a utopian/ unknowability, the monster appears in the *FB* without a specific name.

describes monsters as “disturbing hybrids whose externally incoherent bodies resist attempts to include them in any systematic structuration . . . a form suspended between forms that threaten to smash distinctions”(p.6). The Monster for Cohen is absolute “otherness” that cannot be defined or included in any symbolic order. However, in *FB* the monster or “Whatsitsname” attempts to restore, though by violence, the regulations and laws of the society. The monster itself is a unique example of unity, it says: “I’m made up of body parts of people from diverse backgrounds — ethnicities, tribes, races and social classes — I represent the impossible mix that never was achieved in the past. I’m the first true Iraqi citizen.”(Saadawi,2014, pp.146-467)

Saadawi implicitly invites Iraqi people to imagine a better society in which the monster represents an optimistic future, a unified entity and a utopian vision. In this case the utopian representation continues to be understood as a design or an image of a better society. This utopian vision is not understood in the sense of perfection, rather as an alternative to the present situation(s), as Fredric Jameson(2004) in *The Politics of Utopia* argues that utopian thinking is much to do with the with the current situation and to criticize its negativity. In this sense utopia is a collective consciousness and shared ideology that focuses on the present crisis; its function is to give alternation. It is a critical utopia which does not concern with the future as much as with the present transformation. Jameson writes:

Its[Utopia’s] function lies not in helping us to imagine a better future, but rather in demonstrating our utter incapacity to imagine such a future- our imprisonment in a non-utopian present without historicity or futurity- so as to reveal the ideological closure of the system in which we are somehow trapped and confined.(p.46)

The way in which the monster concerned with the question of societal essence determines its overall function. It becomes a tool of criticism and a keen observer for all problems: fears and anxieties of Iraqis after the US invasion and the collapse of its regime. In other words, it is a form of postcolonial resistance and a site of freedom which everyone longs for. For Jameson(2007) the negativity of Utopia paves the way for the “answer to the universal ideological conviction that no alternative is possible”(p.xii).

Sadaawi's monster represents a universal or a dominant ideology of collective impulse that shows the responsibility of each individual for well-being of "Other". "Whatsitsname" encourages to think critically about the current crisis, and "to think the break itself . . . not by offering a more traditional picture of what things would be like after the break"(Jameson, 2007, p.xii). That is why Iraqi People awareness of their current situation leads them to become collectively unified.

#### Political ideology of the monster's body

Art in general and literature longs to invoke a utopian vision of political ideologies of a current situation. In *Archaeology of the Future*, Jameson (2007), also notes that the notion of utopia is politically oriented in the way it motivates a collective and revolutionary way of change. Art for him "aims to finding new society, alongside written exercises in the literary genre" (p.3). To go beyond the present existing world, there is a need for a utopian imagination. This way of imagining as an alternative world flourishes from collective awareness of the inequality and injustice of the present political situation, leading to some sort of understanding the suitable solution to what the artist or the writer believes to be. Jameson adds that "[w]hat is wanted is a great collective project in which an active majority of the population participates, as something belonging to it and constructed by its own energies"( Jameson, 2007, p.278). In Jameson's view the literary utopia is a continual organic unity, in the way that it is both a writer's dynamic critique of existing political and societal problems and an imagination or a model of better society. This "neutralization"

has less to do with the construction of someone's idea of a perfection society that it does with a concrete set of mental operations to be performed on a determinant type of raw material given in advance, which is contemporary society itself or what amounts to the same thing on those collective representations of contemporary societies that inform our ideologies just as they order our experience of daily life.( Jameson, 2007, p.6)

*FB* extirpates the specific root of the evilness of the criminals and the postcolonial Iraqi regime. It carries a revolutionary idea for better future. Aesthetically, science fiction finds its way as a utopian genre in the



contemporary literary theory and provides a critique for political institutions through imagining a world qualitatively distinct from the present time. The novel *FB* supports a political ideology which provides a harsh critique of the US invasion and the postcolonial Iraqi regime with all their consequences. Saadawi, by sketching the monster, believes that there must be a political transformation as a way to resolve the current political issues, but to do so, Iraqis must ignore discrimination and sectarian violence. The monster then is the best example of collective representation and the body of political ideology of utopianism. Such a critical assessment of the monster as a means of practicing the desire of utopian imagination can be read positively in Iraqi people. In Baghdad, perceive the monster as a savior:

They are all poor, and I'm the answer to the call of the poor. I'm the savior, the one they were waiting for and hoped for in some sense. These unseen sinews, rusty from rare use, have finally stirred. The sinews of a law that isn't always on the alert. The prayers of the victims and their families came together for once and gave those sinews a powerful impetus. The innards of the darkness moved and gave birth to me. I am the answer of their call for an end to injustice and for revenge on the guilty. (Saadawi, 2014, p.143)

The ontology of the monster shows that the core of the conflict is a political. The real danger is not the monster but the conflict of different forces on the ground, while the monster is being explained as a power of justice and a voice of unity. In her book *Utopia as Method*, Ruth Levitas (2013) argues that although utopia may be understood as a distribution of the present time, yet its main function is to understand the political needs and the urgent necessities for perfection. It cycles for understanding and raising aspirations that definitely different from those of the present. Levitas describes this method as an educational method for human desire and need for better way of being or living. It is an "Imaginary Reconstitution of Society" to challenge the inequalities and injustices.

Utopian art in this sense is a harsh critique and a platform of change which aims to substitute collectively the present situation with a better one. That is why the monster is being supported by a lot of Iraqi people who think it the savior and the only powerful force a change. They find it, and as the

monster believes itself, the only moral and humane example in the world. When the “Whatsitsname” has serious putrefaction one of his believers devotes his life and offers needed spare parts. The monster narrates that “[t]his believer went into the kitchen and came back with a large knife. He told Whatsitsname he could kill him and take the parts he needed.”(Saadawi, 2014, p.202). Even his creator, Hadi and other believers, decide to help the monster in his mission. In a conversation between Hadi and the monster, Hadi advises him to do certain steps to explain his aim and mission for the public:

The monster develops gestures to provoke collective communication to formulate a protest against different parties and militias prevailed in the Iraqi scenery after US invasion. The monster is successfully generated a good halo to gain a lot of supporters of different social and educational background such as the philosopher, the magicians, other people and even the enemy. Those followers help him in his mission and they promote certain idea about the monster among the Iraqi people who are waiting for a power for salvation. (Saadawi, 2014, p.154)

Nameless/ unnamable monster: A utopian reality

Post-postmodern creation of the monster in *FB* is reinforced by another aspect of tantalization. This time comes from the system of signification. Historically, the monster came to exercise human linguistic experience. It signifies, though it remains beyond our linguistic capacity, a “Thing”, “Otherness” and “Lack”. In *The Unnameable Monster In Literature And Film*, Maria Beville(2014) discusses how art and literature are made of gaps and dashes in language or symbolic to leave the door opened for the reader to fill those gaps. She draws upon the Lacanian psychological theory to explain the psychological process of representing the unrepresentable. She believes that all arts ascended their popularity from the notable capacity to voice unnamable. In the process of signification the gap or what Lacan calls a ‘Thing’ “remains unrepresentable” and it “cannot be represented by something else”(p.70). It is our desire, then, which represents or imagines something to end up the nothingness and leads to “fashion this signifier and introduce it into the world ... Fashion it into image of the Thing” (Beville, 2014, p.70). The signifier or symbolic

delimits what is not represented (otherness) and gives it the imagined appearance and real meaning. To imagine a thing is then “a matter of taking a certain stance with respect to the problematic of the Other” in which the subject “addresses himself and orders himself on the basis of his imaginary other.”(Lacan, 1992, np)

Furthermore, what we bring to the world is not only the previous materialistic knowledge, but also our imagination about “thing”. The unknowable “Thing in itself”, Beville explains following Immanuel Kant’s view on the unknowable, exists independently and paradoxically as it appears in the real or phenomenal world. Our imagination, for her, produces the real image of the “thing” outside what is traditionally appeared. This paradox of the unknowability is an essential part of our understanding the world. The “radical alterity” of the lack “void” lies outside the individuals’ mind which gives new truth(Beville, 2014). In this sense the Post-postmodern function of language makes us feel a new reality other than the language of cynicism or irony. This novel reality performs a social purpose which the writer longs to (McLaughlin, 2004). Post-postmodernist thinking seeks to give meaning back into society and discourse and provide a balance between faith and desire, and that’s why the language has an impact of creating peace and war, otherness and knowable, and monster and humane.

Based on the conception above, we can estimate that Saddawi’s *FB* is a seminal work leaving the unnamable monster to be represented or named by the masses. Essentially, it is his monster’s act; body and aim designate the main content of its character. “Whatsitsname” is enigmatically unnamed and being unnamable to meet what the writer believes, to be [the monster] a good/ bad model for Iraqi people as it does not belong to one individual or ethnicity and of course this is the pivotal reason behind the namelessness. It retains human emotions and responsibilities that sketch his body and subjectivity as a collection of humans. The monster, is then, a social utopian body of concepts which has neither identities nor ethnicities. The monster describes itself as a universal body saying: “[b]ecause I’m made up of body parts of people from diverse backgrounds – ethnicities, tribes, races and social classes – I represent the impossible mix that never

was achieved in the past. I'm the first true Iraqi citizen.”(saadawi, 2014, p.146)

The unnamability of the monster affects the whole society since it belongs to no body, terrain or sect or even has a definite name. The notion or the signification comes as a reaction to the shattered Iraqi identity after the U.S. invasion and the issue of Iraqi national identity is violently exposed after collapsing of Saddam Hussein's regime. So, no name pluralizes the existing social identities and establishes imagistic connection to whole society. The politics of utopia in Saadawi's *FB* is found on harsh negativity, a violent rejection of the falsehood of Iraqi violence of different parties, sects and religions. The monster is a powerful collective desire or behavior which groups the shattered identities. This power is what Michel Foucault calls “polymorphous conducts” that “extracted from peoples' bodies and from their pleasures... [and] drawn out, revealed, isolated, intensified, incorporated, by multifarious power devices”( as cited in Visker, & Turner,1995, p. 83). The monster has no name, as deliberately portrayed by the writer, to give him a tantalization for its existence in which every Iraqi individual finds a reflection, aim and a means to an end in one corpse. Each sect or religion observe a special idea in the appearance of the monster, for example to the Christian old woman Elishva is a substitution of the lost son who did not come back home after sending him to fight during the war between Iraq and Iran. Elishva thinks that the God backs him again, giving him the symbolic of resurrected figure. The inspiration over the utopian collective imagination as it is well-known is that each individual imagines it according to his ethnicity and needs. Utopia is then nothing but a collective desire for good within the framework of final truth. It suggests an emotional departure from the traditional transgression to be cited as a collective peaceful trait within human subjectivity.

Choosing a name for the monster is not a difficult task for its creator. “Whatsitsname”, in fact, does not come arbitrary or even come from forgetting the name or something like that, rather Hadi deliberately repeats the name of “Whatsitsname” each time he narrates his story. To make it the most dialectical creature in literature that opens up of different significations: it is none of us, yet all of us. It is to keep the idea embodied

in the layers and the stories for generations and be a voice of unspeakable innocent people.

Those collective concepts of the monster gives an explanatory power to pluralizes the existing identities and establish a romantic imagination of a utopian life, and this is the primary demand of the Iraqi society especially after the US invasion. People put an imaginary signifier to give a meaning of that nameless monster. Symbolically, people fill the gap made by fiction with a representation which compensate the “lack” or the “void”. People, thus elevate the monster to a dignified symbol or to use Lacanian term of “sublimation” which means “raises an object to the dignity of the Thing”(Lacan, 1992, p.214). That is why the Iraqi people perceive the monster as a savor.

The monster’s utopian content message

Within the difference between the dystopian and utopian discourse, Davina Cooper(2014) observes that utopian narrative suggests a change. People strive to create a strong hope and belief in the possibility of changing their present situation for better. More positive and romantic imagination of the monster is revealed throughout the panoramic description of its utopian-content message. *FB*, generally transmits moral messages by showing examples of justice and equilibrium. It invokes also the collective moral imagination as the monster appears in the time of crisis. Jeffery Jerome Cohen(1997) again explains monsters in terms of resurrection which never die and always return and when they return they bring a new knowledge and a new reality for understanding the present cultural and social perspectives. Cohen writes:

These monsters ask us how we perceive the world, and how we have misrepresented what we attempted to place. They ask us to reevaluate our culture assumptions about race, gender, sexuality, our perception about difference, our tolerance toward its expression. They ask us why we created them.(p.20)

The monster, Frankenstein, in *FB* backs again to life, but this time is different; it takes from the crisis for recalling hope in the face of the catastrophe and suffering of injustice. He also states that when the monster

backs it “bear(s) self- knowledge, human knowledge- and a discourse all the more sacred as it arises from the outside”(Cohen, 1997, p.20). This means that the monster is connected to the outside or current crisis. That is why Iraqi people long for, because of the current situation, a change and something to stand for the absent justice. Thus, the idea of monstrosity in *FB* is ironically an ideological departure from the “lack” or “void”. The monster opens up new potentialities and possibilities characterized by hope which pluralizes its original trajectory both in aim and message. It emphasizes the target of better that emerges from the excessive tragedy and strange type of suffering and injustice. Moreover, it does not reject life itself but the condition by which people live their life in war and aftermath. The monster, thus has a sacred and noble message. Its only aim, though it has been accused of being criminal, is to avenge from all criminals to fulfill the heavenly justice. The monster, as Hadi observes, “wasn’t looking for stardom or a chance to show off or display his strength. Nor did he intend to frighten people. He was on a noble mission and had to carry it out with a few complication as possible”(Saadawi,2014, p.132). He adds that “he [Whatsitsname] had killed Abu Zaidoun to avenge Daniel Tadros, and he had killed the officer in the brothel because he was responsible for the death of someone whose fingers Hadi had taken for Whatsitsname’s body.”(Saadawi, 2014, p.132)

“Whatsitsname”, overcomes with righteous anger, sets about taking revenge upon those who have had a hand in making Iraq a slaughterhouse. To accomplish his mission the monster also killed some criminals who participated in killing innocent people and that the justice of law failed to punish them. The monster announcing himself as “the only justice in this country”. It adds:

I killed the Venezuelan mercenary in charge of the security company responsible for recruiting suicide bombers who had killed many civilians, including the guard at the Sadeer Novotel, Hasib Mohamed. I killed the al-Qaeda leader who lived in Abu Ghraib and who was responsible for massive truck bomb in Tayaran Square that killed many people, including the person whose nose Hadi picked up off the pavement and used to fixed my face.(Saadawi, 2014, p.153)

The idea of justice is the strongest justification for writing such a novel by which the writer creates “Whatsitsname” in parody with the idea of the savior that prevails in many religions. This mythical creature incarnates the eagerness of the Iraqi people for justice. It is the idea which is repeatedly heard by the monster and his followers. Saadawi intends to ensure, though indirectly, that justice is possible and that it is essential for social reformation. The monster also claims that: “with the help of God and of heaven, I will take revenge on all the criminals. I will finally bring about justice on earth, and there will no longer be a need to wait in agony for justice to come, in heaven or after death.”(Saadawi, 2014, p.143)

Saadawi believes that the idea of hope and justice can be achieved by breaking the social boundaries and by penetrating into social conflict. Perceiving the reasons behind generating that fragmentation and immorality, the society can go beyond its present situation for a better future. “Whatsitsname” is a traumatic narrative tool by which the writer stresses the binary of justice/ injustice within the absence of the individual and social security. U.S invasion, fear, killing and religious and sectarian strife are all participated in searching for a “Thing” or a symbol to stand for the absent justice.

### Conclusion

Above the paper argued that, focusing on the representation of monster, the heated social and political disputes of the Iraqi current situation which is demonstrated by the appearance of terrorism, US invasion and sectarian violence, finds its way throughout a mythical creature to acquire a new signification. The figure of horror has obtained a new meaning other than that of horror and threatening. The monster in *FB* incarnated three distinguished routes; the sacred body, the name and the message. This combination allowed the argument to: firstly, move beyond the traditional meaning of monstrosity in which the crucial aim of monstrosity is not to frighten or to bring sense of death, but to emit life and hope for a waste life and land. Secondly, the combination was ,also, meant to revival a utopian desire, in the post-postmodern era, as the monster’s body, name and aim address a collective desire for change. In other words, The monster, as fragments, is stitched together forming a unity, representing wholeness and

calling for a collective desire. Saadawi, by new image of monstrosity, creates a critical analysis of Iraqi society, in that his work shows a heightened awareness of the utopian impulse. He , moreover, addresses the problems of the Iraqi society, then he seeks solution for those problems through a universal corpse image. The corpse then is best to be understood in terms of reconstruction rather than deconstruction.

The paper also, argued that *FB* emphasized the revival of utopianism which postmodernism developed a sense of skepticism to it; therefore, the paper is worth to be placed within the context of the post-postmodernism. New signification was being thrown on the ontological and social representation of the monster beyond traditional description of monster. As a voice of justice, the monster is given a space to express its thoughts as a final truth and a sense of totalitarianism in a fragmented society. Thus, the revolutionized image of the monster sets out to challenge the limits of despair and to portray the perfect total utopian society. That is why Iraqi people give the monster a universal religious image. They described it as savior which lift them from the ditch.

Finally, *FB*, though implicitly, expresses the desire to reconnect literature to the social world, and by doing so this work is a departure from postmodern literary works. It creates the monster as a response to basic human ethics to have justice. Saadawi's response to the Iraqi crisis lies in his belief that *FB* with its social purpose has the ability to change or at least to provide an alternative world. The result is that Gothic narratives are continually shift the attitude towards social problems, their representing and attitude towards the process of changing the world.



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اعادة النظر في تمثيل الوحش: الجمالية الطوباوية في رواية فرانكشتاين

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المخلص

تاريخيا غالبا ما يرتبط تفسير الوحش على انه العنف والرعب والشى الذي يجب تجنبه لاستعادته النظام وتنظيم المجتمع. لكن المقالة الحالية تهدف الى تحليل، وخلافا للعديد من الدراسات السابقة، الى تحليل تمثيل الوحش في رواية فرانكشتاين في بغداد لأحمد السعداوي على انه يمثل جسد طوباوي، يتوبي، او هو الامل والحرية والعدالة لفترة ما بعد الاحتلال الامريكي للعراق. فالوحش هنا يمثل العودة الى زمن السرديات الكبرى او "اليوتوبيا الجديدة" في الرواية العراقية المعاصرة. يتمحور البحث حول التفكير ما بعد الوظيفة التقليدية للوحش من خلال كيفية ارتباط الوحش بالرغبة الجماعية للخلاص وفي دور أفضل في زمن الأزمات المجتمعية المتعددة. أن قيمة إنشاء مثل هذا الوحش هو تقديم روح جديدة للقارئ مرتبطة بالامل والخلاص بدلا من الروح الهشة التي تأتي من الفشل والتدمير لما بعد الحداثة. في داخل هذا المسخ الفرانكشتايني، تكشف المقالة عن ثلاثة طرق تعالج صراحة الرغبة المثالية او الطوباوية: الجسد، الاسم والهدف أو الرسالة النبيلة والذي هو في حد ذاته تحول من حقبة ما بعد الحداثة إلى حقبة جديدة تتميز بإحياء طوباوي بعيدا عن العدمية وضياع الامل. وتخلص المقالة إلى أن الوحش يُعطى مؤشراً وصوتاً جديدين ليتم قبوله في ثنايا المجتمع عكسا لما هو موجود في الأدب القوطي التقليدي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الرفض، اليوتوبيا الجديدة، بعد ما بعد الحداثة، أخرى، الترتيب الرمزي للمجتمع