Research Journal in Advanced Humanities

RJAH

https://doi.org/10.58256/y5zzb052

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REVIEW ARTICLE

Section: *Literature, Linguistics & Criticism*

Reanimating horror: Gothic critique of violence and fragmentation in Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad*

Ahmed Saad Aziz
Department of English, College of Arts, University of Al-Qadisiyah, Iraq
Email: ahmed.aziz@qu.edu.iq

ABSTRACT

Ahmed Saadawi wrote *Frankenstein in Baghdad* in 2013 in Arabic. However, it was translated in 2018. In his novel , Saadawi implemented the gothic idea about reanimation . He attempts to show how Iraq torn apart. Further, he picturizes how sectarian violence as well as political chaos have divided Iraq. The paper argues that Saadawi's monster acts as a powerful metaphor for the national spirit of Iraq. This symbol has clearly occurred in the novel as a hope for Iraqis. It is embodied in a composite entity stitched together from the remains of bomb victims. The paper draws a comparison to Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). It investigates how Saadawi recontextualizes the gothic tradition. He uses this tradition to critique religious extremism which occurred after the US-invasion of Iraq in 2003. The study focuses on the monster's role. The monster acts as an agent of vengeance. This role challenges the religious taboo against reanimation. It exposes a cycle of violence carried out by some radical religious authority. While exposing this, the paper argues that Saadawi's narrative critically underscores the importance of coexistence and the ethics of human dignity in a post-invasion Iraq.

KEYWORDS: Gothic defamiliarization, Horror, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad,* Resuscitation, Religion

Research Journal in Advanced Humanities
Volume 6, Issue 4, 2025
ISSN: 2708-5945 (Print)
ISSN: 2708-5953 (Online)

ARTICLE HISTORY

Submitted: **13 October 2025**
Accepted: **30 November 2025**
Published: 31 **December 2025**

HOW TO CITE

Aziz, A. S. (2026). Reanimating horror: Gothic critique of violence and fragmentation in Shelley's Frankenstein and Saadawi's Frankenstein in Baghdad. *Research Journal in Advanced Humanities*, 6(4). https://doi.org/10.58256/y5zzb052

Published in Nairobi, Kenya by Royallite Global, an imprint of Royallite Publishers Limited

Introduction

As an internationally acclaimed novelist, Ahmed Saadawi stands among many Arab contemporary novelists, contributing to the Arab novel and world literature as well. Saadawi is also a screenwriter, poet, journalist and a documentary film maker. For his contemporary Gothic novel, *Frankenstein in Baghdad (2013. Trans. 2018)*, Saadawi won the international Prize for Arab Fiction in 2013. Being an eyewitness of 2003 American invasion of Iraq, Saadawi wrote this novel to respond to the outbreak of terror, particularly in Baghdad, reaping innocent citizens. The novel explores the political Iraqi situation to reveal the brutal damage of the neo-colonial practices. It depicts a new modern gothic horror to expose "the ugly face of technological advances and the extensive use of militarism" (49). As Seda Arikan and Gülsüm Tuğçe Çetin put it, in this novel Saadawi "portrays how the social and political vacuum that emerged immediately after the US invasion was replenished with radical groups that led to suicide bombings, looting, assassinations, insurgencies, kidnappings, and later to IEDs and militia warfare. In other words, he fictionalises the birth of a monster out of this chaos" (180).

This paper examines Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad* as a contemporary gothic novel that adapts and recontextualizes gothic tropes to explore the socio-political fragmentation of Iraq, with a specific focus on the interplay between political turmoil and religious extremism as drivers of violence. Rania Reda Nasr (2019) contends that by drawing on Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Saadawi replays the gothic narrative of fear, horror, and monstrosity, reconfiguring these elements to address the collective trauma and disintegration of the Iraqi nation. Marwa Alkhayat (2022) argues that "*Frankenstein in Baghdad* is a cautionary tale about monster-making that goes beyond control" (49). This means it reveals two central gothic themes in the novel. These are horror and monstrosity. However, Saadawi's story does not simply warn against dangerous knowledge, as Mary Shelley's does. Instead, Saadawi faces the broken sense of identity in Iraq after the 2003 U.S. invasion. Further, the novel's portrayal of the unnamed monster (Whatsitsname) acts as a metaphor. The monster represents a war-fractured nation. That's because of the 2003 invasion and the sectarian violence that occurred. It is also because political forces that have long exploited ethnic and religious differences (Cohen, A., & Efrati, N. 2011).

The central themes of the novel are fear and horror. They transcend spatial and temporal boundaries. Both Shelley's and Saadawi's works grapple with horror as an existential force that disrupts societal norms. "He [monster] might have spoken, . . . one hand was stretched out, … to detain me, but I escaped and rushed downstairs. … catching and fearing each sound as if it were to announce the approach of the demoniacal corpse to which I had so miserably given life" (Mary Shelley, p. 45). However, Saadawi's monster is a modern adaptation of Shelley's creature, yet its namelessness and ambiguous nature mark it as a symbol of the unresolved questions about Iraqi identity and humanity following decades of conflict. "My face changes all the time," the Whatsitsname tells the old astrologer that night. "Nothing in me lasts long, other than my desire to keep going. I kill in order to keep going" (Saadawi 246). This unresolved state brings us to Julia Kristeva's theory of the "abject," which she describes as that which destabilizes order and identity (Kristeva, Powers of Horror 2024). However, Shelley's monster has fixed shape and face. Shelley says, "his eyes, if eyes they may be called, were fixed on me. His jaws opened, and he muttered some inarticulate sounds, while a grin wrinkled his cheeks (45)." By making Whatsitsname a fragmented entity stitched together from Iraqi victims, Saadawi connects gothic horror to Iraq's fragmented national psyche, echoing the abjection of lives reduced to body parts in the aftermath of war (Sinéad Murphy 276).

Saadawi brings the gothic tradition to modern Baghdad. He does this by reimagining Shelley's laboratory. In Saadawi's novel, it becomes Hadi's chaotic room.

Hadi is a junk dealer. He collects the remains of bomb victims. He assembles them into a single, monstrous body. This means that this act symbolizes a desperate yearning. Further, it is a wish for national unity amidst terrible fragmentation. In the novel, Hadi states clearly his goal. He claims that the body "to be respected like other dead people and given a proper burial" (Saadawi 79).

To put it clearly, this macabre creation is a form of critique. What it means here, it means that it criticizes the systemic neglect of the dead. Also, it critiques the normalization of violence, which spreads evil through the city, Baghdad. In this sense, scholar Cavareo sees the monster's body as a reflection of the thousands of civilian deaths during the 2003 US invasion and the civil war that followed. This makes the monster a powerful symbol of collective grief and trauma (Cavareo, 273).

Here Hadi's room is revealed as the gothic chamber. For the simple reason that it turns into a site of production where horror does dual work. The horror is a protest and plea for human dignity.

In that same vein, Saadawi thinks beyond the US invasion. Also, he alludes to previous wars, in this case, the Iraq-Iran war. A crucial example connects the monster to Daniel, a son of a character named Elishva. Daniel is a stand-in for unaddressed trauma from that eight-year war. As a result, this link reflects the circularity of violence and grief. This means that old wars re-emerge in strange and troubling ways.

Also, Daniel's return as the Whatsitsname taps into a crucial gothic idea. It is the "return of the repressed" (Fred Botting 2013). In gothic fiction more generally, traumatic experiences left unhealed come back as ghosts or monsters. With this, Saadawi constructs Iraq's ordeals as a gothic story. So this story gets drowned out by other horror stories that never go away.

Moreover, Saadawi constructs the monster out of dismembered body parts. This is a commentary on war as

dehumanizing. Hack-up bodies signify diminished human dignity. People are reduced to flotsam of violence. This connects to Cavareo's argument. Cavareo writes that violence "offends the ontological dignity that the human figure possesses and renders it unwatchable" (Cavareo, 9).

This is why the role Hadi plays has been important: He is named, from a word in Arabic that means "the one who leads" or a "guide." This is a reminder of the fact that human body after death is sacred. His outcry is over the government's failure to provide victims a proper burial. It also casts him as a moral voice amid Baghdad's increasingly unordered collapse.

Another horrific image is found in the interplay between body and spirit. That's to say, this tension in *Frankenstein in Baghdad* shows Saadawi's engagement with a core gothic theme. Also, it explores the tension between the physical world and the metaphysical one. For example, the encounter between Hasib's soul and other bodies it finds in a sea of bodies body reflects that. It is worth noting that it is the same body that Saadawi's monster inhabits. In this encounter, Hasib's soul years for the sea where Hasib has never approached but seen only television:

> He saw a man in a white vest and white shorts floating faceup in it. What bliss! He must be looking at the stars, clear in the night sky. He was drifting slowly with the current. Hasib moved toward him and looked into his face. "Why are you looking at me, my son?" the man said. "Go and find out what happened to your body. Don't stay here." He saw another dead body, floating face down in the water. It didn't say anything. It just floated slowly, in silence. (Saadawi 85)

The encounter with the dead bodies brings to the surface the trauma of the war and the loss of his own physical body. He is haunted by unanswered questions that denote the lingering sense of injustice. It suggests a state of dissociation for Hasib's soul. In this sense, Hasib observes the scene almost as an outsider, detached from the emotions and the full impact of what he is witnessing. Mohammad Al-Leithy argues that Hasib's soul "tells us about bodyless souls and soulless bodies in Baghdad. Souls wander in search of their bodies, or even any other dead bodies that can provide vessels for such roaming, lost souls. A soul gets particularly lost when the body is torn into tiny pieces so that nothing of the body remains" (13). This aligns with Shelley's exploration of duality in Frankenstein, which Harold Bloom interprets as a division between "solipsistic and generous halves of the oneself" (Bloom, 4). Saadawi extends this duality by embedding his monster with the anguish of a soul seeking justice. The portrayal of estranged soul seeking a place to dwell is in contrast to the religious interpretation where the spirits of the victims would rise high to rest in paradise. Accordingly, the novel suggests that instead of peace and reconciliation, the souls of the dead set a journey of loss and despair. Linking this with the hypocrisy of characters who claim to be religious, the novel metaphorically illustrates how faith is weaponized to create disillusionment, division and resentment. Thus, creating a human monster for revenge will definitely lead to disaster. "The created being, subordinated to God and at the same time separated from him by free will, can commit sin only through willful nonobservance of the rule" (Kristeva, p. 130).

Saadawi embeds gothic horror within Iraq's contemporary reality. This means that he transforms the genre. It becomes a vehicle for political, religious, and social critique.

To put it clearly, the stitched corpse roams the streets of Baghdad acting as an agent of vengeance. This monster embodies the unresolved grievances of a nation.

Moreover, Saadawi employs a supernatural-inflected technique known as gothic defamiliarization. Which is to say that, for all that it offers the promise of intimacy, this technique shows us things we know — a war-scarred city, say — in uncanny and unsettling ways. Also, this approach challenges readers. It makes them deal with the hideous facts of Iraq's splintering. This is watching the extrusion of our political, social and physical disintegration on the lines of sectarian loyalty. So readers also need to witness the staggering human toll of an extended war.

This approach places *Frankenstein in Baghdad* within a specific tradition. It belongs to the tradition of protest literature. Here, the gothic genre is used to expose and critique deep societal and political failures.

Monstrosity, Revenge, and Religion

Through my close reading to Ahmed Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad* it looks like it draws heavily from Mary Shelley's original novel. Also, it extends the classic themes of monstrosity and societal critique. Thus, these ideas are applied to the contemporary status of Iraq. It is portrayed as a victim of invasion, which led to sectarian violence and political turmoil.

In another way, Shelley's novel was a response to the Industrial Revolution in Europe. It also explores how destructive unchecked scientific ambition can be. Harold Bloom notes that Shelley's work encapsulates.

> The quest of a solitary and ravaged consciousness first for consolation, then for revenge, and finally for a self-destruction that will be apocalyptic, that will bring down the creator with his creature" (Bloom, Mary Shelley, p. 9).

Saadawi's novel mirrors this path. But it doesnot substitute the hubris of science with less dangerous magic. These are the forces of colonialism, religious and political fanaticism. The text portrays this violence, , noting, "On the same route said armed gangs were hijacking cars and, depending on the passengers' religion, massacring some in the nearby orchards"

(Saadawi 221). In so doing, Saadawi turns Shelley's critique. He uses it as a mirror of contemporary crises such as gothic defamiliarization, horror and the tearing apart of a nation.

Both books feature monsters that are the physical manifestation of collective fears. They demonstrate also that these fears are grounded in different cultural and historical apprehensions. For instance, Shelley's monster embodies all the isolation of the Industrial Revolution. It is the "monstered birth" that represents to us the moral price of untrammeled development (Botting, Gothic, p. 105).

But Saadawi's Whatsitsname is a product of post-2003 Iraq. That makes it literally made from the limbs of sectarian violence victims at that time. That is to say there's an essential divergence in their aims. But Shelley's monster reaches out in search of connection only to be rejected. Saadawi's monster is a direct reflection of Iraq's brokenness. The Whatsitsname symbolizes collective grief, anger, and a deep longing for unity in a nation torn apart by divisions.

And Saadawi's novel provokes a rethinking of religious and ethical issues. It also concentrates on the reanimation of a human form which is present in Shelly's work. Shelley's story itself criticizes the Industrial Revolution from a Christian perspective. It's an example of the hubris of making without divine patent. This desparation is expressed in the following lines: "I often sat for hours motionless and speechless, wishing for some mighty revolution that might bury me and my destroyer in its ruins" (Shelley, 132).

Critics such as Anne K. Mellor claim that it is because Frankenstein tried to "usurp the role of God." This expresses concerns with industrialization undermining traditional Christian values (Mary Shelley: Her Life, Her Fiction, Her Monsters, p. 79).

Similarly, Saadawi adds in an additional twist of religious culture to the mix. In a different manner, he combines Islamic and Hindu views on the soul and body. It also explicitly draws on Hindu concepts of reincarnation. The soul of Hasib animates the reconstituted corpse, challenging Islamic and Christian taboos regarding the body in death.

> O Jatavedas, when thou hast matured him, then send him on his way unto the Fathers… let thy fierce flame, thy glowing splendour, burn him With thine auspicious forms, O Jatavedas, bear this man to the region of the pious. Again, O Agni, to the Fathers send him who, offered in thee, goes with our oblations. Wearing new life let him increase his offspring: Let him rejoin a body, Jatavedas. (Krishnamacharya E. Agni sooktham, 1-8).

Scholar Daniel Bassuk's work supports this exploration. He observes that in Hinduism, "salvation depends upon belief in incarnation" (Incarnation in Hinduism and Christianity: The Myth of the God-Man, p. 10).

So, such concepts let Saadawi question the universality of religious doctrines. Further, he does this when he speaks about the trauma of Iraq. Another difference lies in the monsters' drives. Yes, Shelley's creature seeks vengeance only against its creator, Hugo. However, Saadawi's Whatsitsname takes on a more complex, that's to say, quasi-redemptive role. For that, it enacts vengeance as a collective symbol of all violence victims. It targets criminals who perpetuate Iraq's suffering.

Although the mission for justice is violent, it has an underlying ethical dimension. It can also be seen through a lens of salvation. The monster is animated by the soul of Hasib. A key moment occurs: "[Hasib's soul] touched the pale, naked body and saw his spirit sink into it... because probably, he realized then, it didn't have a soul, while he was a soul without body" (Saadawi, 87).

In fact, the monster functions like a secularized savior. To clarify it, it is a necessary evil born from national suffering. Its violent acts are a desperate attempt to restore moral order where the state has failed. In short, the creature itself laments, "They have turned me into a criminal and a monster, and in this way, they have equated me with those I seek to exact revenge on. This is a grave injustice" (Saadawi 159).

As scholar Ruaa Jaddoa Galhem argues, "at first, Frankenstein seems like a saviour. He aims to seek vengeance against murderers, abusers, and bombers" (797), even though his actions soon become morally ambiguous.

Saadawi's monster does not only represents the culmination of Iraq's traumas—like the Shiite-Sunni conflict at that time, but also it is more than a gothic horror figure. To sum up, it is a commentary on the ethical dilemmas of a society at war. Further, it grapples with sectarianism and the painful quest for a national identity.

It can be observed that Saadawi transforms the monster into a vehicle for exploring reconciliation and redemption. This takes us to gothic defamiliarization literature which often explores the psychological effects of societal breakdown. The purpose is that Saadawi's Whatsitsname becomes a call for unity.

Frankenstein: Reanimating Horror

Horror and terror are a constant in human history and has no cultural or temporal limits. It also evolves through each era of religious and political dispute. Where in everything from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* to Ahmed Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, the gothic provides a template. This framework is utilized to interrogate and challenge these submerged anxieties.

Yes, Shelley's novel was published in 1818, and it is largely regarded as a product of the Romantic era and that it channeled

fears about science advancing without proper regulation. But its themes still echo and telegraph the dilemma of today. They resonate with our 21st-century experiences of horror and violence. And in the same way, Saadawi re-casts Baghdad as a gothic setting. In it, "death stalks the city like the plague" (Saadawi, 65). It is the embodiment of ubiquitous, inescapable horror that characterizes life in the modern world.

On History, the gothic genre are what humans really fear. Thus, Botting contends that, "The Gothic reflects cultural anxieties and tensions, creating monstrous forms to articulate fears that are otherwise inexpressible" (Gothic, p. 89). Also, one could argue that Shelly's monster is unnatural in the sense of becoming a deadly form of unintended consequence from human ambition and technology. That's because these fears have lingered. We witness this in contemporary usage, when we speak of a "Frankenstein" force as being any that can no longer be controlled, either scientific or social.

In his novel, Saadawi reinterprets the practice. He sets it in post-2003 Iraq. In this case, it is Baghdad that becomes the gothic space at that time . It's a city engulfed in violence - constantly teetering between life and death in the most bizarre fashion. What Saadawi describes is a place of "everyday horror." The specter of terrorism inviting braces Shelley's older fear of that which is unknown and cannot be controlled. This unsettling gothic tale casts terror — whether scientific, political or otherwise — as a perennial human preoccupation.

Ultimately, that both Shelley and Saadawi show that monsters are not born but made. That is because they are products of their environments. In Shelley's novel, Victor Frankenstein's creature is can be seen as a cautionary tale. It warns of the danger in scientific ambition without restraint. Shelley's monster reflects the hubris of its creator. It is a grotesque reminder of the cost of "overstepping [moral] boundaries" (Youvan, p. 3). The creature's alienation from society highlights a key theme. It symbolizes humanity's failure to accept responsibility for its actions.

In contrast, Saadawi's Whatsitsname is the summary horror of contemporary Iraq. In contrast to Shelley's poor, unwanted creature, Saadawi's monster embraces a moral crusade. That's because it fights for those who are wronged. This monster carries a literal and figurative reconstruction of Iraq's violated 'body politic' (M. Pinfari, p. 31). By resurrecting the dead, Saadawi accomplishes two things. He criticizes the dehumanizing impact of terrorism. He also points to the sanctity of human life, including after death.

Both books are about bringing the dead back to life. It raises serious ethical and philosophic questions. Frankenstein, Shelley's monster cautionary tale about the perils of "playing God." This theme has antecedents in the Romantic criticism of industrialism. As Mellor notes, "Victor's hubris lies in his attempt to transcend human limitations, creating life without regard for its moral and ethical implications" (Mary Shelley: Her Life, Her Fiction, Her Monsters, p. 76).

Similarly, Saadawi's novel depicts contemporary science being used to bring ruin. However, Saadawi extends the discussion. He ties reanimation to the quest for identity and justice. It's not just a monster, but the repository of memories and grievances. It is also a reminder of those who have been forgotten, the victims of Iraq's violence. As Hadi explains: "I made it complete so it wouldn't be treated as trash" (p. 79). Here, reanimation is a demand for accountability and humanity restored. Evidence of this can be seen that Shelley and Saadawi use their monsters to explore the nature of terror. In Shelley's novel, the monster's anonymity evokes a primal fear of the unknown. In Saadawi's book, the Whatsitsname represents the unseen forces of horror plaguing the city. This ambiguity is captured in the text: "What would the criminal look like, the brigadier wondered? . . . This man who could take bullets without dying or bleeding, how horribly ugly would he be? How would he be arrested if he wasn't afraid of death or of gunfire?" (p. 146). This mirrors the fear and mistrust in a society where the line between victim and perpetrator is blurred.

Yet Saadawi's monster manages to trace the existential despair of a world where justice is, as one character observes, not found at all – instead violence swells: (Eddo Evink, 2014) In attempting to reimage Shelley's story in contemporary Iraq, one can argue that Saadawi demonstrates is that horror and terror are universal, and a part of what it means to be human. In the end, the two novels evidence a truth: monsters aren't by definition bad. They also are the products of the fears and flops of their makers. As such, the real horror isn't in the monsters themselves, but in the social constructs that breed them.

The Stitched Body, Unity, and Anger

The stitched body of the Whatsitsname is a potent image in Saadawi's novel. It's about Iraq — and violence. And yes, the monster itself is not inherently evil, but it's victim of the societal chaos that surrounds it. It reflects the actual, broken bodies in the streets of Baghdad.

Saadawi's monster is more than mere physical parts. It represents the combined rage, futility and burning need. It represents wisdom and reconciliation for Iraq's fractured people. This pieced body makes clear that Iraq can only confront the terrorism and violence that beset it if it is united.

Briefly, the monster's grotesque, stitched form is a metaphor for Iraq's fragmented society. It reflects the deep rifts that have been created during times by ethnic, religious, and political divisions. "a stitched-together collection of the remains of victims, unified by a single, restless soul" (Saadawi, p. 25). This physical form or what is called monster which is made of different parts symbolizes a national need. It is an advice that in order to confront those adversaries the country, Iraq must

unite as one body. The monster "exemplifies the potential for unity within a fractured nation, where disparate groups must come together to 'rebuilding [cohesive] identity'" (Daneil S. Morris, p. 17).

The Whatsitsname's body is more than a weapon of vengeance; it's an archive of collective knowledge and identity. This of course implies that the creature has a soul, and that it needs a body in which to carry out its purpose. This is proof for me that identity cannot be divorced from history. The body, clearly, is what comes to set and contain the soul's purpose, i.e. that identity does require a bodily connection with the past.

This relationship between body and soul recalls a concept from theory. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari argue that a body is defined by what it can do. They write:

> We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do...how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects...to exchange actions and passions or to join with it in composing a more powerful body. (Deleuze & Guattari, p. 257).

The sewn elements of the monster's body in Saadawi's novel indicate their participation in shaping a cohesive and powerful nation. The corpse is formed from the bodies of hapless victims. This is just one example of how collective memory matters. It's something that helps shape a nation.orianCalendar Casinos this position is one of the latest generation through being elements the previous application you were at 1983 all other hand you want to get into your personalized statement first.

We can say that Hadi's role mirrors Victor Frankenstein's from Shelley's novel. Each is a creator who makes a monster. Their acts of creation begin with a desire to fix a deep loss. Hadi stitches body parts together because he wants to restore dignity to the dead. This echoes Victor's own ambition to conquer death. However, their motivations are very different. Victor's creation springs from hubris. In the same sense, Hadi's creation is an act of mourning. It is also a form of resistance because he is pushing back against the dehumanizing effect of war. "Hadi's monster is a subversion of the Frankenstein archetype, turning a symbol of unchecked ambition into a representation of collective grief and justice." This means that "Had's goal behind creating Whatsitsname is a noble one" (Raad Kareem Abd—Aun, p. 1754).

To put clearly, the relationships between creator and creature also differ. For example, In *Frankenstein*, Victor abandons his creation and this starts a cycle of rejection and revenge. While Saadawi shows a different connection. For example, in the novel, Hadi remains tied to the monster. This reflects how all of society is connected to the horrors it represents. "Hadi himself was on the Whatsitsname's list. But the Whatsitsname's time wasn't unlimited, and he had to complete his mission quickly. He should really have stood up right then, strangled Hadi on his bed" (Saadawi, p. 141). This highlights a social and political dynamic. It shows the communal responsibility for the violence that created the Whatsitsname.

Also, the stitched body also works as an allegory. It represents the socio-political reality of Iraq. The monster is built from different parts reflects Iraq which is made of diverse groups. But these divisions have been made worse by outside forces. The American invasion is one example. Another is how local actors exploit sectarian differences. The stitched body is a metaphor for a fragmented state. Its pieces can only work together if they are connected by mutual understanding. As one analysis states, "It is a hybrid character composed of different body parts that belong to Iraqi citizens from different religious backgrounds and ethnicities stitched together into a disfigured combination because it is created out of hatred and conflicts among Iraqi people" (Raad Kareem Abd—Aun, p. 1753). The monster seeks to avenge the innocent. This mission points to the failure of others, like the Americans, to protect people and provide justice. It is, as one scholar says, a nation's mission that is itself "fragmented and injured" (Haytham Bahoora, p. 196). Saadawi points to this inability to stop the violence, writing, "The American army is unable or unwilling to stop the violence, so at least a balance or an equivalence of violence has to be created. Without it, there won't be a successful political process" (Saadawi, 182). This fantastical element shows the impunity of criminals. It stresses the need for a unifying force to bring justice.

However, the creature's actions raise ethical questions about vengeance. Shelley herself warned about unchecked ambition. She writes, "Seek happiness in tranquility and avoid ambition, even if it be only the apparently innocent one of distinguishing yourself in science and discoveries" (Shelley, p. 239). Scholar Theodore Ziolkowski observes that Victor Frankenstein "marks a discovery that involves an enormous potential for good. But because he renounces the responsibility for his discovery, it is subverted by society and becomes a tool of evil" (Ziolkowski, 44).

In the same vein, Saadawi critiques the cycle of violence. This cycle is fed by religious and political beliefs. He suggests that even anger rooted in justice can lead to bad results. The stitched body, therefore, is a strong symbol. It stands for Iraq's broken reality, for its shared grief, and for its deep desire for justice.

It is born basically as a justice-seeker which is "seeking revenge for the innocent killed in sectarian violence" (Raad Kareem Abd—Aun, p. 1755), defining himself as "the saviour" (Saadawi 123). Through this symbol, Saadawi critiques the socio-political forces that sustain division and terror while calling for a reimagining of national identity as a unified, inclusive body. "The policy of the American ambassador to create an equilibrium of violence on the streets between the Sunni and Shiite militias, so there'll be a balance later at the negotiating table to make new political arrangements in Iraq" (Saadawi 182). As

remarkable instance of gothic literature in Iraq and the Middle East, Saadawi's novel stands out as a compelling reimagining of the Frankenstein myth, rooted in the specific historical and cultural realities of Iraq.

Conclusion

Thus, in their treatment of evil's manufacture, the two novels illustrate how gothic defamiliarization and horror appear as diverse political, religious, sectarian and regional expressions. By doing so, a creator who forsakes their creation illustrates just how perverted science can be. The works of Shelley and Saadawi are not assaults on science or ideology. But they are warnings about responsibility. The tales share a common source in the two stories. They reveal that boundless ambition — in science or in faith — inevitably leads to ruin.

Shelley and Saadawi make powerful ethical and religious symbols. They want the reader to consider progress and what exactly is right. Shelley's is one of the Romantic contributions to the warning against human pride. But Saadawi sets upon the shattered world of Iraq after 2003. He explores the causes of contemporary horror.

Saadawi's criticism, moreover, is not limited to science. Instead, he discovers that violence is driven more by sectarian confict at that time — the Sunni-Shiite struggle — than technology in Iraq. Also, his story illustrates a dangerous cocktail of power, religion and identity. It is in this hybrid that horror takes shape. Science, in his novel, is just a tool, like the bombs used in attacks. The battle that counts is for ideology.

To put it bluntly, Saadawi's point is that violence doesnot spring from their single villain. It is the fabric of society. People, knowingly or not, help it persist. In both cases each book is an affront to society to deal with the repercussions of their actions. They demand accountability from everyone. The responsibility is not only of scientists or religious leaders. It is also the public's. The responsibility isnot just for scientists or religious leaders. It belongs to the public, too. The choices people make together can deeply—and tragically—shape the world.

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