

**Representations of Terrorism in Ahmad Sadaawi's
Frankenstein in Baghdad and John Updike's
*Terrorist: A Comparative Study***

صور الارهاب في رواية احمد السعداوي فرانكنشتاين في بغداد والارهابي
جون ابدايك دراسة مقارنة

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Authorization

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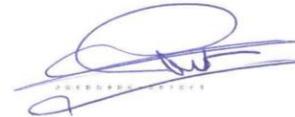
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Dedication

- To my late Uncle who I miss a lot May he rests in peace
- To my parents who I adore
- To all of my family, my brothers and sisters.
- To my brother Karrar and his sweet family Tabark, Ameer and Ayten.

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**Representations of Terrorism in Ahmad Sadaawi's
Frankenstein in Baghdad and John Updike's *Terrorist*:
A Comparative Study**

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Abstract

This thesis deals with literary depictions of the concept of terrorism. It aims to explore how terrorism is presented in two selected novels: Ahmed Sadaawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad* (2013) and John Updike's *Terrorist* (2006). To achieve this purpose, the thesis draws upon an analytical descriptive approach. An in-depth analysis of the characters who represent terrorism is provided. The thesis draws upon two different approaches about terrorism; these approaches are Samuel P. Huntington's the "Clash of Civilizations" and Tariq Ali's views of terrorism in his book *The Clash of Fundamentalism*. The thesis argues that terrorism is represented in different ways in the selected novels. The thesis argues that Sadaawi depicts terrorism in his novel as a consequence of the Western invasion of Iraq, a notion that corresponds to Huntington's view. On the other hand, Updike depicts terrorism as an outcome of religious fundamentalism.

Keywords: Representations of Terrorism, *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, *Terrorist*.

صور الإرهاب في رواية "فرانكنشتاين في بغداد" لأحمد السعداوي و"الإرهابي" لجون

أبديك دراسة مقارنة

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الملخص

تتناول هذه الأطروحة الصور الأدبية لمفهوم الإرهاب. ويهدف إلى استكشاف كيفية تقديم الإرهاب في روايتين محددين: روايتان لأحمد السداوي فرانكنشتاين في بغداد (2013) وجون أبدأيك إرهابي (2006). لتحقيق هذا الغرض، تعتمد الأطروحة على نهج وصفي تحليلي. يتم توفير تحليل متعمق للشخصيات التي تمثل الإرهاب. تعتمد الأطروحة على كتابين مختلفين عن الإرهاب. هذان الكتابان هما "صراع الحضارات" لصموئيل ب. هنتنغتون وآراء طارق علي في الإرهاب في كتابه "صراع الأصولية". نقول الأطروحة أن الإرهاب يتم تمثيله بطرق مختلفة في الروايات المختارة. تجادل الأطروحة أن السعداوي يصور الإرهاب في روايته كنتيجة للغزو الغربي للعراق، وهو مفهوم يتوافق مع وجهة نظر هنتنغتون. من ناحية أخرى، يصور أبدأيك الإرهاب كنتيجة للأصولية الدينية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: صور الإرهاب، فرانكنشتاين في بغداد، الإرهابي.

Chapter ONE

1.1. Introduction

Conflict is part of human nature. Conflicts have been taking place ever since creation and throughout history. The motivations and causes of conflicts may differ from one period to another. Conflicts lead to the rising as well as the falling of civilizations. Terrorism generally means the practice of violence against civilians. This term was not used until the occurrence of the 9/11 attacks and the declaration of the “War on Terror” On September 16, 2001, Bush made an announcement that was entitled “Remarks by the President upon Arrival”, in which he declared his “Crusade” on terror as a response to the 9/11 attacks (George Bush speech 2001, BBC News).

Terrorism can be defined in many ways among which is: an extreme action against civilians "primarily " officials, Military targets to induce fear and disorder into a society in advancing ideological, religious, or other agenda, its impact can be significant. Yet Terrorism is the act of minorities (Crotty 2005,6). Terrorism may be provoked by many ways. In his *book Dark side of Democracy* (2005), Mann traces the history of violence against majorities which is called "cleansing ". He argues that violence might be a response to an attack or a mechanism of defense. Furthermore, he triggers the issue of religious warriors. For Mann, those people are not very violent, they just endeavor to make their community Safer. According to Mann,

Jihadis of the Islamic world are not necessarily violent unless they feel threatened by their enemies. By the end of the Cold War a new enemy has to be known to the American citizen this enemy called the Islamic Terrorism, two main countries where the causes as the US accused of Terrorism; Afghanistan and Iraq. Afghanistan was occupied by the US in 2001 while Iraq was occupied in 2003 but the accusations for the invasion of Iraq were different from Afghanistan, Iraq's invasion built up on a big lie where the US accused Iraq of having mass distractions weapons.

Terrorism has been a prominent theme in many contemporary literary works and has been presented in variable ways. This thesis is primarily concerned with exploring representations of the concept of terrorism in two novels: Ahmed Sadaawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad* (2013) and John Updike's *Terrorist* (2006). The two novels belong to two different cultures and were written in two different languages. Ahmed Sadaawi depicts the situation in Iraq following the American invasion of the country in 2003 while John Updike wrote his novel following the 9/11 attacks in 2001. In examining the novels' representations of terrorism, the thesis draws upon Huntington as well as Ali's views of terrorism.

1.2. Biography of Ahmed Saadawi

Saadawi is an Iraqi poet, novelist, screenwriter and documentary maker. Sadaawi was born in 1973 and grew up in the city of Baghdad. He was awarded his degree from the University of Baghdad, Faculty of Art, Arabic Language Department. He left his country, Iraq in 2019 because of his political views during 2019. Saadawi won the International Prize for Arabic Fiction in 2014 for his novel, *Frankenstein in Baghdad*. In 2010, he was selected as one of the 39 Beirut project participants.

1.3. Biography of John Updike

John Updike was known as an American novelist, essayist, and short-story writer. He was born on March 18, 1932 in Reading, Pennsylvania and died on January 27, 2009, in Danvers, Massachusetts. He graduated from Harvard University and commenced his mission as a writer at an early stage of his life. He published many literary productions among which are: *The Rabbit Saga* (1960, 1971, 1981, 1990), *The Centaur* (1963), *Couples* (1968), *The Witches of Eastwick* (1984) and *Terrorist* (2006). Updike was awarded two Pulitzer Prizes for Fiction (1982, 1991); two National Book Awards (1964, 1982); 1989 National Medal of Arts; 2003 National Humanities Medal; Rea Award for the Short Story for outstanding achievement; 2008 Jefferson Lecture, the U.S. government's highest humanities honour. Updike's writings were concerned with issues related to the American middle-class

such as: marriage, dead-end job satisfaction, in one of his interviews with Jane Howard 1966 he said, “My subject is the American Protestant small-town middle class; it is in middles that extremes clash, where ambiguity restlessly rules”. His upbringing as a Protestant religious person influenced his style of writing; he tried to highlight and depict the Protestant traditions and norms through literary works.

1.4. Statement of the Problem

Terrorism is an issue that concerns people around the whole world. It affects humans in the different parts of the globe and influences the relationships between the different countries. Throughout the history of humanity. Many violent incidents took place in history. Yet, the incident of 11/9 led to the emergence of the concept of “Terrorism” differentiating it from the concept of “violence”. Literature always plays a vital role in representing real-life issues, among which is the dilemma of terrorism. However, authors of literary works may differ in presenting the issue of terrorism and its causes in their literary production. This study aims to explore literary representations of the concept of terrorism and its causes and in two works that belong to different cultures. To this end, the study examines the author’s ideas, beliefs and ideologies that made them write these works and provides comparison between the two novels. The

researcher will depend on the two theories in this regard, namely, the “Clash of Civilizations “and “Clash of Fundamentalism”.

1.5. Objectives of the study:

This study aims to.

- 1- Examine representations of the concept of terrorism in John Updike’s *Terrorist*.
- 2- Examine depictions of the concept of terrorism in Ahamd Saadawi’s *Frankenstein in Baghdad*.
- 3- Compare and contrast how the concept of terrorism is depicted in each novel as well as the characters who are presented in the novels as terrorists.

1.6. Questions of the study

This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. How is terrorism represented in John Updike’s *Terrorist*?
2. How is terrorism depicted in Ahmad Saadawi’s *Frankenstein in Baghdad*?
3. What are the similarities and the differences between the two novels’ depictions of the issue of terrorism and the characters who are presented as terrorists?

1.7. Significance of the study:

While terrorism is ascribed sometimes to religion, it is argued that terrorism is the outcome of imperialism and colonial practices. This study examines the reasons for terrorism as depicted in the works intended for discussion. The significance of this study lies in the fact that it sheds light on the issue of terrorism from the perspective of two different authors who belong to two different cultures. It also explores how the characters who are presented as terrorists appear in each work. This researcher attempts to give a critical view by comparing the two works that are based on two important events: the first is 9/11 which inspired John Updike to write his novel. The second one is the American invasion of Iraq which encouraged Ahmed Saadawi to write his novel.

1.8. Limitations of the study:

This study will be limited to the study of both novels: John Updike's *Terrorist* and Ahmad Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad*. The outcomes of the study and its findings cannot be generalized to all the literary works of Updike or Saadawi.

1.9. Definitions of terms:

- **Comparative Literature:**

“Comparative Literature is the study of literature beyond the confines of one particular country, and the study of the relationships between literature on one hand and other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the arts, philosophy, history, the social sciences, the sciences, religion, etc. on the other. In brief it is the comparison of one literature with another or others, and the comparison of literature with other spheres of human expression.”

Henry Remak (1961).

- **Terrorism**

The term terrorism emerged after 11/9 as a concept separated from violence and assassinations. It has many definitions, most scholars defined “terrorism” as a horror attack on civilians or institutions and military organizations. In their book, Schmid and Jungmann assume that it is not defined instead terrorism is a synonym for “political violence”, “crime “or “killing of innocent people”, victims of terrorism are not specified. An American critic implies that the target of terrorism is psychological and symbolic, not material. (Schmid & Jungmann.2005, P8)

- **The “Clash of Civilizations”**

Clash of civilizations is a political theory that was written and published between (1993-1996) by Samuel P. Huntington where he stated that the

conflict after the Cold War would take another shape in the new world. For Huntington, the major conflict in the world would be a religious as well as a cultural one. For Huntington, the relationships between Islam and the West have been problematic since the rise of Islam. In this regard Huntington says: “Conflict along the fault line between Western and Islamic civilizations has been going on for 1,300 years. After the founding of Islam, the Arab and the Moorish surge west and north only at Tours in 732. From the eleventh to the thirteenth century the Crusaders attempted with temporary success to bring Christianity and Christian rule to the Holy Land” (31). (Huntington 1996). Thus, according to Huntington, the cultural and the religious differences between Islamic countries and the West will stay a main source of conflict and will consequently generate violence.

- ***The Clash of Fundamentalism:***

The Clash of Fundamentalism is a book by Tariq Ali (2002). In this book, Ali provides his political views of violence and terrorism. In response to Huntington’s thesis following the 9/11 attacks, Ali published his book *The Clash of Fundamentalisms* (2002). Unlike Huntington’s theory, Ali’s book argues that Muslim violence is caused not by religious and cultural motivations but rather by unfair Western policies towards Islamic countries. As Ali puts it, “the American Empire has constructed a new enemy: Islamic terrorism” (xiii).

Chapter TWO

2.1 Introduction

The theme of terrorism in literature has been examined by many scholars in an attempt to explore how terrorism is reflected in literature as one of the modern issues that affect human lives. The role of novelists and writers is to pass the human experiences to the generations and document what happened in the past, and the role of critics is to analyze these works and give their opinions on them. This part of the proposal presents the previous works and criticisms that have been written so far about Ahmed's *Frankenstein in Baghdad* and Updike's *Terrorist*.

2.2 Review of Theoretical literature

This part of the thesis is a review of the theories used to examine the two novels. Reflecting on the relations between Islam and the West, Samuel Huntington projected his thesis of "The Clash of Civilizations" in a lecture back in 1992; the thesis was later published in 1993 in an article entitled "The Clash of Civilizations?". Afterward, the article was developed into a book entitled *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996). In the article, Huntington argues that following the Cold War, major conflicts will take place between nations and groups belonging to different cultures and religions. For him, "The clash of civilizations will dominate

global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future” (22). According to Huntington, the relationship between Islam and the West has been problematic since the Middle Ages: “Conflict along the fault line between Western and Islamic civilizations has been going on for 1,300 years. After the founding of Islam, the Arab and the Moorish surge west and north only ended at Tours in 732. From the eleventh to the thirteenth century the Crusaders attempted with temporary success to bring Christianity and Christian rule to the Holy Land” (31). In *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Huntington maintains that the major conflict in the world following the Cold War will be between “the West and the rest” (183).

In response to Huntington’s thesis following the 9/11 attacks, Ali published his book *The Clash of Fundamentalisms* (2002). In this book, Ali argues that Huntington’s thesis oversimplifies the reasons for terrorism. For Ali, terrorism is derived by unfair policies and military interference in countries. Thus, Ali and Huntington offer two contrasting views about what provokes terrorism. In light of the theorists’ accounts provided above, the thesis tries to analyze the two novels intended for discussion in order to examine the authors’ perspectives on the causes of terrorism.

2.3 Empirical studies

Rawad Alhshmi (2020) conducted a research paper titled "the Grotesque in *Frankenstein in Baghdad: between Humanity and Monsters*". The researcher questions the themes of justice and violence. The author uses three theoretical frameworks of three different philosophers, the Russian philosopher and Literary Critics Mikhail Bakhtin, the ethic philosopher Emmanuel Kant and the German American philosopher and political thinker Hanna Arendt. In his research, he argues that Sadawi draws on the metaphor of the monster not only to capture the mode of the dystopian mood in post-2003 Baghdad but also to question the tragic realities, and the consequence of war, as well as the overall ramification of colonialism.

Elayyan (2017) published research titled "The Monster Unleashed: Iraq's Horrors of Everyday Life in *Frankenstein in Baghdad*". In this paper, he argues that in the novel, Sadawi tries to say that, everyone is blamed no one is purely innocent or purely a victim.

Hassen Hussein (2019) conducted research titled "Reconsideration the Corpse: An Aesthetic of Utopia in Ahmed. Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad*". The study explains the idea of violence in terms of a Utopian site of hope, freedom and justice. The paper revolves around post-traditional thinking of monsters through investigating how a monster is related to a collective desire of hope for better roles to about 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.

Another study was written by Jinan F.B Al_Hajaj titled "Magical Realism, the Oracular, Mysticism and Belief Legacy in Ahmed Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad*". She argues in her study that the novelist sets his realistic account in the mystical, oracular and diverse cultured heritage of Mesopotamia. Thus, the author strikes a balance between a realistic view of life on the one than marvelous mysterious on the other hand.

Ahmed Ghazi (2020) also published research titled "Al Shismma's Character as a Justice Seeker and an Avenger in Ahmed Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad*". The researcher examined and studied the monster's character, Al_shismma that is created from the corpses of the bombing victims in Iraq. The researcher also argues that Saadawi's depicts the monster as a savior of his people and his country and reflects the harsh and tragic life of Iraqi community during and following the American invasion of the country.

John Updike's novels inspired a number of researchers and received much critical attention. For instance, GHAMDI Published his research titled "Terrorism as a Gendered Familial Psychodrama in John Updike's *Terrorist*". (2015) The article deals with two primary themes. First is the notion of the homegrown terrorist, Ahmad. This notion is perhaps particularly

frightening to the American citizen, as it deprives him of the option of casting the terrorist as an unequivocal other. “The second point, In *Terrorist* is the portraits of the female characters which are so striking as to suggest that a feminist analysis may take us furthest in understanding the overt and hidden allegiances and negotiations of power in this novel. Despite the strength of the depictions of the three principal female characters, Joryleen, Terry and Beth, they are uniformly degraded or ineffectual - in most cases.”

Mustafa A. Abdulrahman (2018) published a study titled "Factors Driving Young Men to Terrorism in Updike's *Terrorist*". In this study, he argues that cultural, political and religious environment can play a rather significant role to collaboratively or separately help recruit a young man to commit a terrorist action against his nation and his people.

Fikret GÜVEN and Bülent GÜVEN, Two Turkish researchers, conducted a study on Updike's *Terrorist* titled “Orientalism in John Updike's Novel *Terrorist*”. The paper argues that in writing his novel, John Updike draws heavily on the stereotypical images of Islam in general and Arab specifically in the West, a notion that has been thoroughly discussed by Edward Said in his book *Orientalism*.

Another study titled as “Colonial Shadows in John Updike's *Terrorist* (2019) was conducted by “Ikbal, Alsoman , Raihanah M. And Ruzy Hashim”

This study sheds light on the reasons of terrorism and depicts the colonial acts that lead to such violent acts.

Another study that was written by David Joins and M.L Smith titled: "Terror and the Liberal conscience: political fiction and Jihad _ The Novel Response to 9/11", which assumed that after the attacks on the World Trade Center and Washington, D.C., in 2001, the Library of the Congress re-established a devised new classification categories -in-Publications. The category, September 11 Terrorist Attacks 2001-Fiction, responds to a distinct genre of political novels.

According to Richard Rorty's, the Western novel can clarify the moral and political options that confront the West. The article examines "what insight, if any, into the motive for violence, and the capacity to recuperate a sense of liberal progressive purpose, and is the purposes offered by the novels of 11 September?" This article also answers the questions of who are the real Terrorists? And what does the word "Terrorism" really mean?",

"Terrorism and the Critique of American Culture" by PETER C. HERMAN (2018) is another study that explores how the cultural differences between the characters in the novel play a major role in creating an atmosphere of violence, which made the researcher suggests that: "The particular terrorist plot may be defused in Terrorist, but the larger issues remain." By breaking the taboo against investigating the terrorist's

motivations and perspectives, Updike invites his readers to think hard about America's culture and its place in the world. Far from a failure, Updike's *Terrorist* should be seen as part of the "political and aesthetic project" of understanding terrorism in our post-9/11 era."

Another study was written by Amin, H. (2022). "Frankenstein's Monster, Past and Present". This study aims to "Drawing on Dina Khapaeva's The Celebration of Death in Contemporary Culture. This article deals with Ahmad Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad* as a manifestation of the global cultural movement. It analyses the novel as a postmodern parody of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, focusing on its obsession with violent death and its reworking of Frankenstein's monster. In doing so, the article demonstrates how the novel captures the nightmarish conditions of post-2003 Baghdad and reveals significant cultural changes in perceptions, attitudes and literary representations of humanity and death."

Another study written by Hope Teggart titled "Frankenstein in Baghdad: A novel way of understanding the Iraqi and its aftermath" argues that Saadawi adopts the particular monster, genre, and setting to emphasize five features of war and its aftermath: the Gothic nature of reality, subjective justice, mutual complicity, the cyclical nature of violence, and gratuitous death. Saadawi strategically utilizes these five features to depict "the complex reality of Iraq."

This thesis attempts to expand on the existing studies on both novels by trying to examine the reasons that lead to terrorism in both novels. Thus, it makes use of Huntington and Ali's view of terrorism to see whether the characters who are labeled as "terrorists" are motivated by religion or by a sense of rejection of foreign interference.

Chapter THREE

3.1 Methodology

This study draws on theoretical analysis of both novels *Frankenstein in Baghdad* by Ahmed Sadawi and *Terrorist* by John Updike. It makes use of two contrasting theories about terrorism. The first one is the theory of the “Clash of Civilizations” which was proposed Samuel P. Huntington in 1993, where he argues that violence is caused by the difference in culture and religion and that the clashes taking place in the world are mainly civilizational. The second view was proposed by Tariq Ali in his book, *The Clash of Fundamentalisms* (2002) in which he argues that imperialism is the source of violence in the world and that terrorism is a reaction to colonial practices. The researcher examines how terrorism is presented in both novels. Furthermore, it will explore how each author depicts the reasons for terrorism in his novel.

3.2 Sample of the study

The sample of the study depends on two selected novels. *Frankenstein in Baghdad* by Ahmed Saadawi (2013) and *Terrorist* by John Updike (2006).

3.3 Procedures of the Study:

To accomplish the goals of this study the researcher observed the following procedures:

- 1- Read the Clash of Civilizations by S.P. Huntington and the critical works that concern this book especially the paper of Eduard Said “The Myth of Clash of Civilizations”
- 2- Read the Clash of Fundamentalism by Tariq Ali and watch YouTube clarification by the author himself.
- 3- Read the original novel by Ahmed Saadawi “Frankenstein in Baghdad” in both Arabic and English languages and the critical studies on this novel.
- 4- Read the original work by John Updike” Terrorist” and the critical studies on this novel.
- 5- Collect the previous studies on both novels, particularly the ones that concern the theme of terrorism
- 6- Compare between the two works based on the theme of terrorism
- 7-Discuss the findings
- 8- Write the conclusion
- 9- Use the APA style to organize the sources of this study like books and websites and previous studies.

Chapter FOUR

4.1 A summary of Sadaawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad*

In his novel *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, Al-Sadaawi provides a fictional account of the period following the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, particularly between 2003 and 2005. Sadaawi borrows the character of the monster that appeared in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) with the objective of describing the dismays of life in Iraq in the aftermath of the invasion.

The novel offers literary depictions of the events that took place at the Centre of Baghdad in the Al-Bataween quarter and the surrounding area. In Chapter One, the character of Um Daniel is placed at the Centre. Um, Daniel, one of the main characters in the novel, is a Christian woman who pays regular visits to the Odisho Church. She is lucky to survive the bombing of Al-Tyarran Square. Some of her neighbors believe that she is a blessed woman and that her presence prevents bad events. The priest of the Church offers her enough help to be able to contact her daughters because they left Iraq. She insists on staying in Iraq, hoping that her missing son Daniel would come back one day. To keep his memory alive, Daniel's family buried an empty coffin. Thus, Um Daniel appears as a character who has profound faith in God, yet emotionally torn because of the tragic incidents that took place in Baghdad; she lost her son and her daughters are away from her.

Consequently, she hates both Faraj and Hadi as they endeavored to persuade her to sell her house and her antics. She curses them along with Abo Zaidon whom she believes to be responsible for what happened to her son, Daniel as he forced him to join the army. She desperately asks God to fulfil her wish in seeing her son again. In Chapter Two, the reader is introduced to the character of Hadi. Following the occupation of Iraq, Nahem, the boy who works with Hadi, dies after an explosion at the Al_Tayaran Square takes place. In response to this dramatic incident, Hadi's mind strikes with a rather weird idea; he decides to collect the corpses of the victims who pass away in the bombings of Baghdad and to collect them together. Hadi informs his friend, Mahmoud about his awkward way of dealing with the dead bodies; yet, Mahmoud advises that the bodies should be buried properly.

Hadi survives another explosion; shocked and devastated, he returns back home rather quickly. As he feels exhausted and stunned, Hadi sleeps for long hours in his old house. Upon waking up, Hadi realizes that the corpse he has made out the remaining of the dead bodies is gone.

At this moment of realization, Hadi feels terrified and confused. The events continue in the same flow and Hasib Jaafar, a security guard, dies as a trash car crushes him while on duty at the hotel he works for. Hasib's body vanishes in the explosion. After his death, his soul meets with other souls

who tell him to find his body and to stay beside it. Hasib's soul finds the corpse that Hadi has created earlier and haunts it. At the very same moment, Um Daniel calls her son's name, praying for God to see him again.

The corpse comes to life and goes to Um Daniel's home and she thinks that it is Daniel. Next morning strange events start to take place; five men are killed. The Abo_Zaidon the barber, is killed in his shop and no one could explain the events. However, roamers speared that an ugly man is responsible for these events and a witness describes him as "a hideous man with a mouth like a gash across his face."

Hadi realizes that the "whatsitsname", the corpse whom he has created is to bear responsibility for the unexplained series of killing that is taking place in the city. Hadi meets the "whatsitsname" and he confesses that he is the one who has committed all the murders that have taken place recently in the neighborhood. He justifies his action by stating that he wants to avenge the innocent people who were the victims of the terrorist attacks in Baghdad. As he indicates, by revenging the innocents people, he can establish some justice.

The government commences an investigation regarding the apparition of this awkward creature and promises a reward for the person who provides information. The narrative informs us as readers that the "whatsitsname" loses part of his body every time he commits a murder. The novel ends on a

confusing note where the reader is unable to tell whether the “whatsitsname” will stop his mission or not.

Terrorism in Frankenstein in Baghdad

As mentioned earlier, *Frankenstein in Baghdad* has been approached by a number of critics and scholars. The novel presents the character of the "whatsitsname" and associates it with terrorism. It is very clear in the novel that the creation of this creature is a consequence of the American invasion of Iraq. The novel shows that following the invasion of Iraq, a state of chaos and disorder swept the country. Despite the fact that the American intervention in Iraq was conducted under alleged objectives, *Frankenstein in Baghdad* features Iraq as a country devastated by terrorism and destruction. The character of Um Daniel, for instance is provided to show that in the aftermath of the American invasion of Iraq, many women were agonized by the loss of their sons who served in the military. Um Daniel is always haunted by the memories of her late son and waits for his return. She is in a state of denial as she refuses to accept the fact that her son passed away and will never show up again.

In the novel, the narrator describes a multi explosions that take place in Baghdad. The narrator provides a grim and a rather frightening image of the explosions and their awful impact both on humans and construction:

"They watched in shock as the ball of smoke rose above the crowds, huge and black, from the car park near Tayaran Square in the center of Baghdad... the drivers were frightened and confused... people were screaming and shouting... the dead would have been taken to the forensic department and the injured toto the Kindi hospital". (p. 1-6)

Later on, the narrator offers another detailed description of the second explosion that happens later and leads to the death of so many people and to so much destruction:

"The explosion was horrific- and here Hadi looked to Aziz for confirmation. Hadi had run out of the coffee shop... The smell suddenly his nostrils, the smoke, the burning of burning of plastic seats and cushions. The roasting of human flesh" (p. 19). It cut electricity wires and killed birds. Windows were shattered and doors blown in. Cracks appeared in the walls of the nearby houses, and some old ceilings collapsed. There was unseen damage too, all inflicted in a single moment." (p.21)

Reading the accounts mentioned above by the narrator, it can be argued that Sadaawi endeavors to show, through his narrator, that the post-war Iraq has is inflicted by death, chaos, destruction, and terrorism. Instead of informing the reader about the occurrence of the explosion, the narrator draws a very detailed, grim and sad image to reflect the dismay and the state of panic that surround the city of Baghdad following the American invasion

of Iraq. As the narrator puts it: ““After the American invasion, everybody noticed that amid the chaos....” (p. 23). The narrator goes on describe the atrocities of the terrorist attacks: “The slaughter had ended several hours ago. But some of the destruction was still clearly visible. It might have been the neighbor’s biggest explosion” (p.8). “The rest of the shed was dominated by a massive corpse... there was only a little blood- some small dried patches on the arms and the legs...it was a fresh nose still coated in congealed, dark, red blood (p. 25-26).

Commenting on the post-American invasion of Iraq, in his book *Bush in Babylon* (2003), Tariq Ali argues that the occupation of Iraq caused to destruction in Iraq. He maintains that the war broke up the Iraqi army and created a state of disorder in the Iraqi community (222). Ali provides in the book a number of pictures that show the reality of the American military actions. For instance, he includes a picture of an Iraqi woman lamenting the death of her child (209). In addition, he provides a photo displaying a heap of dead Iraqis at Abu Ghraib prison (223), which reflects the catastrophic outcomes of war on human beings. Thus, Sadaawi’s literary depictions of the Iraqi situation in the aftermath of the American military intervention corresponds to what Ali states in his book *Bush in Babylon*. Both Sadaawi and Ali try to show that military intervention breeds more violence and feeds

terrorism rather than establish peace. Sadaawi's novel can be seen as a call to stop terrorism by bringing Western colonialism to an end.

In this regard, it becomes crucial to reflect on the impact of the violence being practiced against victims upon the psychological state of Hadi. Upon the death of his friend, Hadi starts to develop a hateful and aggressive attitude towards the American invasion. The death of his friend is presented as a turning point in his life. In this respect the narrator says: "The shock of Nahem's death changed Hadi. He swore and cursed and threw stones after the American Hummers or the vehicles of the police and the National Guard" (p.24). As can be inferred from the narrator's words, Hadi becomes more aware of the negative consequences of the American presence in Iraq following the death of his close friend, Nahem. He realizes that the main source of terrorism being practiced by different people is to be attributed to the invasion of the city.

Hadi himself survives an explosion. This harsh experience that goes through makes more conscious about the huge amount of violence being practiced in the city of Baghdad. Regarding this incident the narrator says: "Hadi saw the rubbish truck race past him towards the gate, almost knocking him over. A few moments later, it exploded. Hadi, together with his sack and dinner, was lifted off the ground with the dust and dirt and blast of the explosion (31).

We are informed as readers that a strange and unexplained series of murders start to occur after the explosions take place. The government starts investigating the murderer, who turns out to be the creature that Hadi has created out of the shreds of the people who passed away in the bombings. When Hadi tells his friend Mahmoud the story of the creature, Mahmoud starts to have his own doubts about the credibility of the story. Hadi decided to record a conversation with the creature during which he confesses that he is the one responsible for the series of killing that is taking place around the city. Moreover, the creature justifies such an action by stating that, for him is it a way to achieve justice and to avenge the victims of the bombings:

“I find myself compelled to make this statement. 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. In fact, there is a moral and humanitarian obligation to back me, to bring about justice in the world. Which has been totally ravaged by greed, ambition, megalomania, and insatiable blood lust” (p. 143).

The statement made by the creature who is referred to as the “Whatsitsname” is highly significant as it embodies the notion that violence breeds further violence and that peace and stability can never be established through the deployment of military action. The body of the “Whatsitsname” is made up the remaining parts of the people who dies in the explosions. The

mission of this creature is to seek revenge. Thus, the novel tries to show that the American presence in Iraq has created nothing but a state of anarchy marked with endless series of killings and destruction. The “Whatsitsname” proves that the American invasion of Iraq generated terrorism and nurture it. The “Whatsitsname” does not represent a person but rather in ideology that will continue to spread. Commenting on the essence of the creature Whatsitsname, one of astrologers in the novel says: “Tomorrow The One Who Has No Name, he mused, might become He Who Has No Identity, and then He Who Has No Body” (p.112).

During his conversation with Hadi, the creature indicates: “Because I am made up of body parts of people from diverse background s, 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” (p.146). The creature indicates here that this chaotic situation has an impact on the whole Iraqi community regardless of religion, social class or political affiliation. Moreover, he alludes in this statement to the sectarian, political and social conflicts in the Iraq community, which became clearer following the American invasion. Iraqi people started to be more conscious about the differences they have got in their communities. In an article entitled “Chomsky Believes the Sunni-Shia Conflict Began in 2003” which was published in 2014, Chomsky argues: “Well, the U.S.-British invasion of Iraq

is a textbook case of aggression. And one of the things it did, one of the crimes was to ignite a Sunni-Shiite conflict which hadn't been going on." . Hence, the novel portrays an image of post-war Iraq, devastated by the turmoil of terrorism and attributes such a situation to the American military presence in the country. Through such representations, Sadaawi does not ascribe terrorism to religious fundamentalism. Rather, he tries to show that violence is being taking place as a response to the American military interference in Iraq. This notion corresponds to Ali's views about terrorism and goes against Huntington's views.

In *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, we see how media plays a rule in directing the events, "the terrorist"; as the government called him. The role of the media in the novel echoes that of the media in reality. The media played a crucial role in the invasion of Iraq. INaom Jomichy says in his book *Media Control*: "Saddam Hussein was a good friend to United States until 2001, but its the need of an enemy to keep fighting". Another strategy often found in US media with regard to the Iraq War is explained in William B. Hart and Fran Hassencahl's essay titled: "Culture as Persuasion: Metaphor as Weapon". These scholars specifically studied the use of metaphor in governmental speeches and in US editorials in reference to Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi War. They emphasized the strategic use of metaphor, specifically in terms of the 'enemy', to create a political justification of the

war. In their content analysis, they found metaphors relating Hussein and the Iraqi military to “snakes, barbarians, criminals, demons, and thieves.”

4.2 Summary of John Updike’s Terrorist

This novel narrates the story of Ahmad Ashmawy Mulloy, an eighteen-year-old man who is an American born. Ahmad lives with his mother, Teresa Mulloy. Ahmed is described as a radical Islamist who seeks to become a Jihadist. Despite his intelligence, Ahmed decides not to Apply to College and to work as a truck driver for Excellence Home furnishings. The novel commences with Ahmed wondering about his surrounding community and the conditions of youths in America. He feels that the atmosphere surrounding him takes him from his faith in God. On the other hand, he finds consolation and comfort at his mosque and in the study of the Qur'an under the guidance of his imam, Shaikh Rashid. Ahmed’s mother was a believer once and was raised as a Catholic but growing up she lost her faith on abandoning her religious roots is one many reasons of Ahmad’s radical Islamist behavior. On the other hand, Ahmad idolizes his father who is of Egyptian origins. Ahmad’s father left him and his mother when he was a child. Ahmad’s choice of his job as a truck driver stems from his belief that driving is a practical skill of good merit whereas academic studies serve only to advance American secular beliefs. He is also afraid that academic studies will strengthen his occasional religious doubt. Trucking allows Ahmad to

fulfill his mission of conducting a terrorist attack against the American people, that is blowing up the Lincoln Tunnel under the Hudson River.

Ahmad accepts driving the truck into the tunnel and to bomb himself. On the day of the planned attack, Ahmad evades being arrested by the CIA. Driving the bomb-laden truck, he encounters Jack Levy on the side of the road before getting on the highway. Jack's sister-in-law Hermione Fogel has alerted him to Ahmad's involvement in a planned terrorist attack.

Jack rides into the Lincoln Tunnel with Ahmad and while on the way, Jack endeavors to persuade Ahmad not to run the attack. Jack reveals to Ahmad that the terrorist plot was a government sting and that his friend and co-conspirator Charlie Chehab was a CIA undercover agent who had his cover blown and was beheaded by others involved in the plot. Jack also admits to having an affair with Ahmad's mother

for the previous several months. While on his way toward the targeted place, Ahmad reconsiders his interpretation of Islam. He realizes that Islam does not allow killing civilians or committing suicide. Upon this realization, Ahmad and Jack ride through Manhattan together towards the George Washington Bridge to return to New Jersey.

4.3 Terrorism in John Updike's *Terrorist*

In response to 9/11 attacks, many fictional works were produced in the different parts of the world, portraying the essence of the conflict between the East and the West. Many politicians and theorists such as Bernard Lewis and Samuel Huntington believed that the attacks were a reminder of the civilizational clash between Islam and the West. For both Lewis and Huntington, the nature of the struggle between Islam and the West is civilizational, meaning that it is religious and cultural. According to Abrahamian (2003): the American media has framed the 9/11 attacks within Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" (529). He goes on to argue that Huntington's thesis has triumphed: the mainstream newspapers and journals, which are read by the "attentive public" such as New York Times, Wall Street Journal and Washington Post, Time, and Newsweek adopted Huntington's theory (530). Abrahamian indicates further that this view was adopted by television and radio networks. He adds that after the 9/11 attacks, Huntington's book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* became bestsellers (529). Many writers in the literary field, intensely embraced Huntington's views and reflected this notion in their writings. John Updike in his novel *Terrorist* which was published in 2006 is among those writers who portrayed the 9/11 attacks as clash of civilization between Islam and the west.

The character of Ahmad who appears as a Muslim fundamentalist is derived by a religious belief that he should attack the American people as they are non-believers. His thoughts are controlled by Shaikh Rashid who keeps exploiting him. For instance, Shaikh Rashi tries to convince Ahmad of the necessity of killing the non-Muslim American in order to be rewarded after his death by joining paradise. Ahmad appears to be swayed by Shaikh Rashid's preaching and replies: "I thirst for Paradise" (p.106). Shaikh Rashid tries to create a binary opposition between Muslims and the West. To give an example, he tells Ahmad: "The atheist Western Scholars in their blind wickedness allege the Sacred Book to be a shamble of fragments and forgeries slapped together." (106) Ahmad is highly influenced by Shaikh Rashid's beliefs. He starts establishing a dichotomy between Muslims and Christians. When entering the church, he starts comparing the church with the mosque: "The mosque was a domain of men; here, women in their spring shimmer, their expansive soft flesh, dominate" (p. 49).

While it is Shaikh Rashid who is creating a binary civilizational clash between Islam and the West in the novel, Updike's representations of both Shaikh Rashid and Ahmad is meant to present Muslims in the novel as violent, backward and incompatible with Western values. Ahmad's rigid views of the community around him are not compatible with the modern American society. The narrative starts with "DEVILS", the word Ahmad

deploys to describes his fellows at high school as they are non-Muslims. Ahmad goes on to say: “These devils seek to take away my God. All day long, at Central High School. Girls sway and sneer and expose their soft bodies and alluring hair. Their bare bellies, adorned with shining navel studs and low-down purple tattoos, ask, What else is there to see?” (3). Thus, Ahmad is presented as a fundamentalist Muslim who does not show any religious tolerance and who has tendency towards violence.

Updike’s also focuses on the absence of Ahmad’s father and His relationship with his mother. He is blushing, stupidly, hating his hot face. But he must get this out: ‘I mean, all those years, there I was obsessing about my father, and you were the one taking care of me.’” Ahmad expresses his emotions to his mother as he is about to take real action. He is ashamed to do so as he keeps criticizing her. However, recent circumstances have led him to rethink his attitude toward her. Indeed, he distorts his father's photographs in his room. His repulsive and emotional character is also obvious from the fact that he cannot control his physical response to his emotions; as mentioned in the first phrase. One of the themes that Updike's relates to creating "Terrorist" is feminine rule, Ahmed is critical towards his mother because of her personality. Updike's tries to show that the feminine side in man's life is important, since it may prevent cruelty

It is rather significant that Ahmad decides to abandon his plot by the end of the novel. Updike tries to show that Islam is not associated with terrorism. Rather, he attempts to show that religious extremism is what leads to terrorism. Thus, while Ahmad is swayed by Shaikh Rashid's thoughts and beliefs, he develops a violent tendency towards his American fellows. However, when he reconsiders his interpretation of Islam away from Shaikh Rashid's influence, he realizes that Islam does not allow the killing of others nor the self. Although Updike tries to create a balanced image of Muslims, he still essentializes Muslim character; the novel does not represent Muslim characters who are moderate. Hence, it can be argued that Updike tries to show that Islamic fundamentalism is the main source of terrorism. *Terrorist* implies that Islamic fanaticism is the main cause of the 9/11 attacks and the subsequent bombings. It is clear that in the novel does not present the American military intervention in the different parts of the world as a main cause of terrorism. Accordingly, one can argue that Updike's views of terrorism correspond to those of Huntington in his thesis the "Clash of Civilizations".

4.5 Comparison between Ahmad Sadaawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad* and John Updike's *Terrorist*

As it has been argued earlier, Ahmad Sadaawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad* and John Updike's *Terrorist* consider the issue of terrorism; yet, in different ways. In his novel *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, Sadaawi presents terrorism as an outcome of the American invasion of Iraq. He provides grim images of terrorism taking place in the city of Baghdad. Sadaawi's novel shows that violence generates more violence and does not create peace and stability. It further indicates that the Western alleged mission of ending terrorism in the Middle East is a failure. Sadaawi deploys the character of the "Whatisitsname" to condemn the American occupation of Iraq. The creature conducts a series of revengeful acts with the objective of avenging the victims who passed away in the bombings of Baghdad. Sadaawi tries to show that in the aftermath of the American occupation of Iraq, the Iraqi people started to be more conscious about their religious, sectarian, political and social affiliations, indicating that the Iraqi community has become more divided following the military intervention. Hadi's character is presented in the novel to reflect the shift in attitude towards the American presence in Iraq. At the beginning of the novel, Hadi does not expose his thoughts about the American invasion of his country.

However, following the death of his friend, he develops a resentful stance towards the American occupation of Iraq. Thus, Sadaawi's representations of terrorism attribute it to the Western military intervention in the Middle East. Such depictions of terrorism correspond to Ali's views of terrorism. As mentioned earlier, in his book *The Clash of Fundamentalisms*, Ali argues that violence is caused by imperialism and unfair policies towards countries.

Unlike Sadaawi, Updike presents terrorism as a consequence of religious fundamentalism. Updike deploys the characters of Ahmad and Shaikh Rashid to suggest that religious fanaticism. Ahmad and Shaikh Rashid show a hateful attitude towards secularism and modernity. They think of their surrounding community as "devils". Derived by his extremist religious beliefs and under the influence of Shaik Rashid, Ahmad decides to run a terrorist attack against non-Muslim Americans. Upon reconsidering his interpretation of Islam, Ahmad makes his mind not to conduct the attack. Thus, Updike ascribes terrorism to religious extremism rather than Western imperialism. As the novel suggests, getting of extremist religious views, terrorism can come to an end.

Updike's representations of terrorism in the novel are similar to Huntington's views. Updike tries to show that terrorism is caused by difference in religious beliefs and cultural norms. For him, terrorism is a "clash of Civilizations". To validate such views, Updike creates a binary

opposition between the Islamic and the American civilizations. Muslims characters are presented as foil to American characters. While Ahmad and Shaikh Rashid appear is rigid-minded, religiously strict, and as having inclination towards violence, American characters appear as secular and moderate. Accordingly, it can be argued that while Sadaawi adopts Ali's views of terrorism, Updike adopts those of Huntington.

Another main point that Updike's novel tries to shed light on is the cultural differences. Ahmad is convinced about the idea that "it does not matter because all American presidents are the same: "They all want Americans to be selfish and materialistic, to play their part in consumerism" (72). This difficult point makes Ahmed feel lost about his identity as an American _Muslim. Losing identity is the century problem dividing the world according to manor identities over humanity keeps making conflicts in this world

In Updike's *Terrorist*, Shiek Rashid and CIA undercover represent the corruption in this system by encouraging Ahmed to be a terrorist. On the other hand, the Whatsitsname is the hero and the corruption of the system: "The definitive image of him was whatever lurked in people's heads, fed by fear and despair." The Whatsitsname, far from jolting Shiites, Sunnis, the Iraqi government and the U.S. military out of their biases, inadvertently ends up reinforcing them".

The ending of Updike's *Terrorist* clarifies how political issues can influence young people; Ahmed is guided to bomb the truck, and Levy saves him and says to him: "those are CIA undercover, trying to make you Muslim killer. After he understood how the world is controlled by the CIA, he loses his faith in God and said: "These Devils, have taken away my God", Updike Deploys the character of Ahmad to show how young people are misled by politics without being aware of the fact that they are the mere victims in this regard. The ending of *Frankenstein in Baghdad* indicates the violence is a continuous act.

Throughout the novel, Ahmad appears to be highly critical of the American culture: "All day long, at Central High School, girls sway and sneer and expose their soft bodies and alluring hair. Their bare bellies, adorned with shining navel studs and low-down purple tattoos," Driving through New Jersey while delivering furniture: "he takes less interest in his diluted pockets of the Middle East turning to be in favour of the American reality all around him, just like a sprawling ferment for which he feels the mild pity owed a failed experiment" (177).

But even though Islam has "rendered him immune" to the allurements of materialism (151), Ahmad's perspective is not so much threatening as threatened: American culture deliberately and maliciously seeks to: "disrupt that primal union that Ahmad feels with his God, and take the All-Merciful

And Life-Giving One from him.” (40).

Peter Herman suggests a major difference between American society and Ahmed’s background and how the whole system makes him feel he is an outsider and not an original American. And the particular terrorist plot may be defused in *Terrorist*, but the larger issues remain. By breaking the taboo against investigating the terrorist’s motivations and perspectives, let alone granting the terrorist an intelligible subjectivity, Updike invites his readers to think hard about America’s culture and place in the world. Far from a failure, Updike’s *Terrorist* should be seen as part of the “political and aesthetic project” of understanding terrorism in our post-9/11 era. As readers, we can see this clearly when Jack advises him to go to the army before the invasion of Iraq and Ahmed replays that: "Army will force me to kill my brothers " as a Muslim he mentions "brothers", in Iraqi, however, Jack responses to him that: "not all Iraqis are insurgents, you know. Most are not. They just want to get with business, Civilization started there. They had an up-and-coming little country, until Saddam.” We can see he tries to clarify things for him through a political answer it's still a clarification because of Ahmed's worldview according to his age. "Any male, even a highly fallible one, would have a powerful influence on the boy if he fills a gaping deficiency - even if, in the process of transferring his allegiance and

obedience to a mortal and therefore fallible male the figure, Ahmad loses or renounces their sense of God." (Alaa., p.11)

Conclusion

Terrorism is a universal theme that has been tackled by many writers in the literary sphere. Despite its universality, the issue of terrorism has been interpreted in various ways by politicians and critics. Samuel Huntington's thesis of the "Clash of Civilizations" suggests that following the Cold War the world will enter a new phase; the civilizational clash will take place between "the West" and "the rest". In light of Huntington's theory, the 9/11 represent a case of a civilizational clash between the Islamic East and the West. On the other hand, Tariq Ali, in his book *The Clash of Fundamentalisms*, argues that violence practiced by some Muslims in Islamic countries is a reaction to the colonial practices and military interventions in such countries. For Ali, ending colonialism will be a way to contribute to the establishment of peace. Authors in the literary sphere adopted such view in their writings. As argued earlier in this thesis, both Sadaawi and Updike approach the concept of terrorism in their novels. While Sadaawi as an Arab writer embrace Ali's political views of terrorism, Updike adopts those of Huntington.

Sadaawi provides a grim account of post-war Iraq and depicts the atrocities of the American invasion of the country. He endeavours through

his narrator to show that the American occupation of Iraq is the main cause of the terrorist attacks happening in the city of Baghdad. On the other hand, Updike tries to show through the character of Ahmad Ashmawi and Shaikh Rashid that religious extremism is the main cause of terrorism. For him, getting rid of religious fanaticism is a means of ending violence and establishing peace.

Recommendations

Based on the limitations of the research, it can be stated that more research regarding the concept of Terrorism in both novels *Frankenstein in Baghdad* by Ahmed Sadaawi and *Terrorist* by John Updike is needed. Some recommendations have been given in order to make future research better and help to get rid of any kind of obstacles during the implementation of the research. The researcher recommends the following:

1. The study recommends further studies on feminine roles as presented in the two novels.
2. The study recommends conducting further studies on the characters by using Cultural studies and psychological studies

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