

*Representation of Reification through the Method of Description
in the New Novel*

(The Guardian of the Shadows by Wassini ALaraj as a Model)

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Abstract

Reification emerged after the expansion of the capitalist system's impact on society. Individuals began to live in a society swept by the ideology of exalting material at the expense of human value . The art of the novel depicts what goes through this marginalized and reified individual's mind . Therefore ,the style of descriptive language changed .That is why we monitor this phenomenon in our study through linking the writer's vision to these linguistic characteristics . In addition we show the text's artistic vision by following the description and analysis method .

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1. Introduction

The new Arabic novel works on strengthening the connection between literature and reality, utilizing everyday events and language as the foundation for constructing narrative significance. Prose writing provides a wide scope for expressing individual concerns and the depths of the soul, while opening our eyes to life with all the details of everyday existence in society. It conveys societies' real life and brings the imagination closer to reality, thereby producing a comprehensive literature in all dimensions. Thus, we find in the novel all the details of the periods that have passed for the human group, and we encounter specific times and places to which the writer belongs.

The previous century was characterized by a revolution in values and dimensions, particularly concerning the value of the individual in terms of their relationships with the surrounding world, the extent of their service to it, and their responsiveness to it. This period was marked by the astonishment of individuals as a result of the global wars that altered the course of science and achievements. Material accumulations grew immensely: factories produced, and laboratories unveiled truths. Consequently, humans fell into a trap they set for themselves (dependence on technology), working tirelessly and diligently to achieve a certain product, and losing precious time from their lives. However, their desire is never satisfied with these products, nor is it adequately appreciated. Everyone is in continuous motion, with no pause or respite. Studies have attributed this condition to the transition to capitalism.

The present study addresses the repercussions of the reification phenomenon in the novel on both the social and artistic levels. In it, we observe the characters' relationships with each other and the significant changes that occur in these relationships due to the value placed on material possessions and the pursuit of individual interests. The study also reveals the decline in the value of humanity as a result of the dominance and oppression imposed by decision-makers and the exploitation of the weaker segment of society, solely for the sake of material gain or superficial appearances that reflect selfishness. Thus, literature expresses this condition, and we notice the spread of a new language and a different artistic style in Arabic novels (such as the novel *The Guardian of the Shadows* 'Harisat Al-Thilal'). It boldly deviates from the traditional and modern styles, especially through the element of description: describing things with human attributes and describing humans with what is attributed to objects.

In the study, we trace this language and emphasize its stylistic characteristics in the novel. The study focuses on the novel "Guardian of Shadows" by the author Wasini Laredj. The approach that serves this purpose is the descriptive and analytical approach, aligning with the investigation of the narrative linguistic style, especially the element of description.

We present a segmented study that serves the classification of the phenomenon artistically, as follows:

2 Reification in Arabic literature

3 Reification through the narrative style of "Guardian of Shadows" novel

3.1 Description of the reified character

3.2 Description of the character's belongings

3.3 Description of the city (collective buildings)

3.4 Dominance of the individual object in the narrative

a. Description of cassia rose

b. Description of the cave

2. Reification in Arabic literature

This issue cannot be examined in isolation from the cultural and civilizational reality. Literature, in its poetic and prose genres, and its various forms, is inherently interconnected with the reality in all its aspects. Literature, reality, and humanity form a dialectical trinity that is bound by a relationship of influence and interdependence. While creativity is an individual act, there is also a collective agency at play. Individual consciousness is merely a reflection of collective consciousness, and the general awareness contributes to shaping the creative vision of the surrounding reality. (قولدمان، 1993، صفحة 232) In the emergence of new expressive forms dictated by the transformations of this reality (literature as a mirror of reality), it reflects the internal debates and questions within it. This is what contemporary sociological criticism refers to. Hence, as a representation of the individual, the intellectual stands in a middle ground position. S/he strives to engage and dialogue with conscious criticism to rectify beliefs and restore rights. In the fictional text, this intellectual figure enters as a knight of platforms, but without action or movement. Even their will fades away after colliding

with an (imaginary) reality that parallels historical reality. Hegel mentioned in his work "Phenomenology of Spirit" (1807) that the bourgeoisie and the ruling class in each historical epoch have a vested existential and material interest in preventing the emergence of such consciousness. They seek to compel their servants and slaves to believe in their dependence on them through ideological or institutional means. (برونر، 2016، صفحة 44) Modernism, on the other hand, has emerged from conflicts, tensions, and disruptions. Renewal is the offspring of modernism, and it is one of its manifestations.

Renewal represents modernism when it addresses its fundamental issues and revolves around the intellectual conflict within it. Therefore, "modernism is generally associated with the rapid shift in knowledge, production patterns, and relationships, which entails a struggle against beliefs and values produced by prevailing modes of production and relationships. Critical evaluative thinking becomes active as a result of this conflict, and fundamental questions are raised for research and reconsideration. This leads to the shaking of values and the system of concepts" (سعيد، 1984، صفحة 26).

In this context, literature is labeled as critical, where the novelist adopts a character (an intellectual) who narrates events that mirror reality. The novelist repeatedly attempts to understand this reality but is met with disappointment and failure. However, they manage to convey their story and unravel the position of the opposing writer who "portrays the ongoing conflict between power and certain social groups. Therefore, it is common to find an analysis of the

intellectual character and their role in society, as well as their relationships with power, in a language that is not devoid of pessimism.” (جمعة، التجريب و ارتحالات السرد) Indeed, we often encounter a style that expresses the alienation of the character from those around them, their rejection of beliefs, and even their withdrawal and diminishing role towards the end of the narrative.

In the body of what has come to be known as "postmodernity," which emerged in the 1950s and 1960s of this century, it is observed that it reinforced the collapse and disappearance of the classical bourgeois concept of the individual. The humanist ideology reached the end of its dissolution in the light of what was called "globalization," the era of integrated capitalism. The old bourgeois individual self is no longer present; rather, it denied the existence of the bourgeois individual self, considering it a myth that never existed. There were no independent selves of that kind whatsoever. (باروت، 1997، صفحة 142) This has brought forth a new perspective in art and style, suggesting the alienation of the common individual as a result of a psychological state that followed the fragmented social condition, leading them towards seclusion and introversion. On the other hand, material interests advanced, giving utmost power to capitalists and the ruling class. This phenomenon is known as alienation, where “capitalism increasingly strips humans of their humanity. Capitalism increasingly alienates humans from their humanity, treating individuals involved in the production of commodities (the proletariat) as mere objects. Meanwhile, the real essence of productive activity (capital) is

transformed into an artificial entity for modern life. The heart of this "inverted world," a concept borrowed by Marx from Hegel, can only be transformed by putting an end to what Marx referred to as the "commodity fetishism" in a somewhat different expression. Ending alienation requires ending reification, which necessitates awareness of what needs to be changed. There is a need to rethink the world in a new way.” (برونر، 2016، صفحة 45)

3. Reification through the narrative style of "Guardian of Shadows" novel

The novelist Wassini Laredj addresses this theme in his novel (Guardian of Shadows), to the extent that it almost dominates the narrative. He does so through characters who meet within the framework of their professions. The narrator or the main character (Hsisen) embarks on a journey where he visits offices that represent a miniature image of state affairs administration. He encounters various characters and engages in dialogues, conveying scenes that imply the value of individuals in that era.

3.1 Description of the reified character

If description in traditional novels was relatively independent of the textual structure, resembling standalone artistic paintings, in modern novels we find description merging with narration, especially through the analysis of characters' intentions. It moves and evolves alongside the events, simply because things have become personified and dominated after the reification of individuals in the current era. From the beginning of the narrative, the novel declares the reification of its characters. It starts with the narrator, Hsisen, narrating the story of how he acquired the

esteemed typewriter after the dismissal of the previous employee and his forced retirement, while he screams: "Fingers of the hand, mere lifeless timber that neither ages nor succumbs to mortality. I am no mere machine, but a human, with emotions known solely to the heart. I refuse to accept retirement. Take from me what you will, but spare me my machine." (الأعرج، حارسه الظلال، 10 صفحة، 2000)

The protagonist of the novel is introduced from the beginning of the narrative, described as someone who is characterized by writing and fear. "Writing... It is a mere tremor of concealed pain that we hide from others, lest they touch the magnitude of our anguish. It is a torment of words, mercilessly slaughtered by a rusted blade, their cries echoing through the abyss. Submerged amidst obstinate sentences, resisting the allure of compliance and simplicity, it is the moment of descending into the harrowing realms of fear." (الأعرج، حارسه الظلال، 11 صفحة، 2000) The character is plagued by pain, tragedy, submission, descent, and fear.

What is noticeable from this description, which represents a summary of the character's description in the novel, is the absence of a protagonist or central character. The characters in this novel are mere symbols or voices, transformed into specters living in an ambiguous world where they neither act nor are capable of acting. This is precisely what Alain Robbe-Grillet declared when he said, "The novel of characters has now become a thing of the past. It was characteristic of a certain era, the era in which the individual reached his glory" (غريبه، 1980، صفحة 145)

The character tries to have dimensions, but it goes against the current, becoming fragmented into two contrasting dimensions. Therefore, the narrator in the novel "Guardian of Shadows" relies mostly on ramifications, which are techniques used in the stream of consciousness. They are primarily built upon psychological and mental processes. The novel opens with this technique: "Sad to the point of bitterness... It preceded me in speaking these words... Here it is, the small lost nominal sentence that I lacked to break free from the circle of whiteness. It alone is sufficient to unravel the knot of this machinery..." (الأعرج، حارسه الظلال، 9 صفحة، 2000)

Hsien resorted to this technique in order to signify the solitude he experiences in the high mountains and the difficulty of speech after having his tongue cut off or due to the danger of being killed after repeated threats... so as not to arouse delicate emotions and the anger of others, or simply because he feared a premeditated abduction. The shaken or unsettled character (العبد، 45 صفحة، 2011) possesses only the technique of referring to psychology. This non-integrated character is characterized by anxiety, fear, forgetfulness, nervousness, and hallucination. Due to its lack of certainty in its relationships with its surroundings and those around it, it withdraws into itself. The writer expresses this through the extensive use of language that suggests confusion, madness, and bewilderment.

We take the excerpts containing the description of the character and extract the attributed qualities to the subject to highlight the style and added significance in portraying the character.

"The protruding bones of Don Quixote were visible beneath his white coat, and his tall figure, nearing two meters, seemed somewhat burdensome to him. His back was slightly hunched under the weight of the backpack that wasn't fully packed. In his hands, he held a complicated map: his essential guide on a journey in search of her madness for a name. He respectfully shook his head after removing his sombrero hat and introduced himself in broken French." (الأعرج، حارسه الظلال، 2000، صفحة 23، 24)

After a brief and concise description of the character's stature and prominent bones beneath the coat, the narrator delves into mentioning various items: a white coat, a filled and intricate backpack, a sombrero hat. Following that, a hint is given about the character's broken French language, adding to the sense of estrangement within this persona. Here, language betrays the individual in certain situations, leaving them feeling fragmented. So, with a quick look at the semantic field of some deliberately chosen words such as "disturbing," "weight," "madness," and "broken," this description foreshadows the journey that Don Quixote will undertake later on, which will be revealed in the subsequent narrative. The description carries loaded value-based characteristics (العمامي، 2010، صفحة 205), highlighting the perspective of the narrator, Hsisen, and his negative orientation.

- "Tawfiq was a short man, short in stature with a round and full body. On his broad shoulders rested a head resembling a watermelon or a slightly deflated rugby ball. His eyes resembled wolf eyes, yellowish, immersed in an impure whiteness". (الأعرج، حارسه الظلال، 2000، صفحة 137)

- "Such observations, even for a moment, revive him and free him from the rubbish heaps in which he lives, from the numbers that fill his head, and from the extravagant business calculations that benefit others. And for all of this, he felt a touch of consideration for himself". (الأعرج، حارسه الظلال، 2000، صفحة 82)

- "Suddenly, a person emerged in our path like a withered tree. I recognized him from his piercing eyes, even if he was disguised behind dark glasses. He confronted us with a dry question on his face". (الأعرج، حارسه الظلال، 2000، صفحة 83)

- "The two policemen remain in their positions like two marble statues. Their presence alone deepens the sense of isolation, loneliness, and chronic anticipation. The peculiar thing about these two policemen is that we cannot pass by them without pausing for a moment. They are alike two pieces of ice. They have the same presence, the same demeanor, the same face, and if I'm not mistaken, the same reactions. They may argue over trivial reasons and in the same manner". (الأعرج، حارسه الظلال، 2000، صفحة 201)

- "The faces of the four men were as cold as metallic pieces". (الأعرج، حارسه الظلال، 2000، صفحة 106)

- "Except for the security guards in their blue uniforms who constantly guard these important places, fixed firmly to the ground like stakes". (الأعرج، حارسه الظلال، 2000، صفحة 136)

In the five passages, the writer employs the technique of simile. Let's closely examine what follows each simile. Firstly: He is compared to a poorly inflated watermelon or rugby ball. Secondly: His mind is filled with numbers and extravagant

business accounts that benefit others. Thirdly: He is likened to a withered tree. Fourthly: The two security guards, like statues made of blue marble, remain fixed in their positions. Fifthly: Their faces, resembling pieces of metal, are cold. All of these comparisons contribute to the meaning and attributes associated with the objects. However, none of these descriptions, as revealed in the semantic fields that deal with human appearance (portraiture), can adequately depict a human character. Upon closer examination, we can observe that these comparisons signify qualities such as hardness, coldness, emptiness, and exploitation in describing the filled head with calculations. All of these elements represent a novelty in the art of description in Arabic literature. Additionally, the description of the head as "filled" carries ideological dimensions, even though it is not morally charged. However, an ordinary reader, due to the element of satire present in these descriptions, easily connects them and retrieves the intended resemblance. As Hamoun suggests, every implicit moral system has an external founding agent outside the text, contributing to the overall implication of the text (العمامي، 2010، صفحة 201). Thus, the language of description takes on a sociological dimension in terms of interpretation and the commonly understood connotations in public discourse. Indeed, what happens to this character can be seen as another reality imposed by the dynamics of capitalist relations, where "progress" gives way to an increasingly deep and impactful gap between the individual and the social. When society separates from human beings their inherent potentials and cognitive abilities, it appears as if these qualities are

reincarnated in various material forms. (حسين، 2022، صفحة 50)

This is evident in the description presented by the novelist of the two police officers in his statement: "like two marble statues " and in the description "Similar to two pieces of ice. They are alike two pieces of ice. They have the same presence, the same demeanor, the same face, and if I'm not mistaken, the same reactions. They may argue over trivial reasons and in the same manner " and also " fixed firmly to the ground like stakes." According to Jamal Barout, the novel of globalization can be described as follows: "The individual is molded and patterned in similar aesthetic, consumerist, gastronomic, symbolic, and practical styles" (باروت، 1997، صفحة 142). This description holds significant meaning in relation to the era, as it reflects the extent of control over the individual and the reduction and distortion of their humanity into something stagnant and immobile, a continuous stagnation. It signifies a clear indication of the increasing management and standardization of modern society. Here, the ideology of postmodernity becomes evident, as indicated by Leo Lowenthal in his collection of essays titled "Literature and Popular Culture," published in 1984. He states, "The increasing absence of individuality among film stars reflects the growing power of commodity form" (برونر، 2016، صفحة 32، 33). This observation highlights the influence of postmodern ideology, emphasizing the diminishing individuality and the dominance of commodification in contemporary society. This style, from our critical perspective, can be distinguished as a portrayal of the social reality observed by sociology. Therefore,

this discourse is an imaginative and creative inclusion of employing sciences and the interplay of expressive genres.

The novel " Guardian of Shadows " presents descriptive language in a scenic manner, such as "Then the figure of the towering university president appeared, his broken shadow cast upon the stacked books in the hall, which seemed never to have been opened due to their elevated positions" (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 228). If we contemplate the sentence, we find it suggestive of personal (physical) description, starting with the word "figure." However, the describer shifts to describing something related to the person's occupation (which is related to knowledge), as the university is the person's primary association. We notice the phrase "stacked books in the hall" indicating abundance and availability, followed by the phrase that alters the meaning, "never to have been opened." Therefore, the places of knowledge are covered by the university president's "shadow. It is an intense and anticipatory description that immediately transports us to the significance of the forthcoming dialogue between the characters, revealing their positions in just two pages of narration. This description is known as " argumentative directing," where the describer's subjectivity and stance become evident. The phrase, through both ethical and aesthetic standards, conveys a specific interpretation to the reader (العمامي، 2010، صفحة 204).

- We take another description of the characters that highlights a shift towards reifying them: "In the forefront of the office sat Mr. Wahib, with his small body concealed behind the large tribal-style desk that he acquired as part of the new reforms.

I could only see his rectangular head and his long, disproportionate hand that didn't harmonize with the rest of his body. He gestured for me to sit" (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 200).

This description is no different in its direction, as the description of the large desk implies a prestigious position through the mention of "new reforms." His small body and long, disproportionate hand further emphasize the objectification. The word "hand" has taken on another dimension in the Arabic lexicon, almost fading in contemporary Arab culture due to its connotation of power and authority.

The narrator (the main character) responds to this stagnation and fragmentation with a sense of defeat and alienation when he resigns from his position as a cultural advisor at the House of Culture and isolates himself in his room. This rebellion, as mentioned by Albert Camus, is characterized by a lack of relevance and quickly fades away. It is a testimony of a lack of coherence and firmness (الزهراني، 2007، صفحة 82).

3.2 Description of the character's belongings

The modernist writer experimented with the new trend of novelists. They eliminated the main character through omission and focused on details. By breaking down the old and building the new, they started to concentrate on unconventional elements. This process was referred to as "defamiliarization" in art. (قاسم، 2004، صفحة 126). The writer (the human being), in their solitude and detachment from their humanity, confronts the situation with a reified language, adopting a perspective that relies on the

reality of deconstruction, where "things become the essence of humanity, from which pride and weakness, silence and movement, rebellion and surrender, greatness and humility, all emanate" (إبراهيم، 1986، صفحة 232). Among them is the following description of Hsisen's office (the narrator) as "this dilapidated office that I have repeatedly promised to change, but to no avail, since I entered the phase of renewal, reaching its peak with the arrival of the new minister" (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 17). We wonder whether the office is being described as the minister or the minister as the renewal campaign. The ultimate purpose of the minister's presence is the offices, and we will see this more clearly as the narrative unfolds.

The language of "reification" is the language that portrays the lost and silent human who gazes at the surrounding objects, perhaps even beyond them. We do not know his state except that he expresses it through the lukewarmness of vision in his eyes, which are searching for something that has not yet been defined. "The sense of hallucination arises not from the vagueness and fluctuation of things, but from their strange precision. Nothing is more bizarre and imaginative than precision in the end" (غريبه، 1980، صفحة 146).

- Wassini Laredj excels in this style in many paragraphs of this novel, such as: "I found him in his usual place behind a beautiful desk made of mahogany wood. Only his head was barely visible. He politely invited me to sit down and then asked me directly" (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 114).

- "He appeared only with his bald head, upon which the vertical light from the ceiling

would break. I don't understand why people of short stature always end up behind desks that tower over them" (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 122).

"There, at the forefront of the office, sat Mr. Wahib with his small body that disappeared behind the large Kabyle-style desk he acquired as part of the new reforms" (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 225). This description carries a clear ideological connotation with the phrase "new reforms."

Wassini Laredj portrays offices, and through them, he encapsulates a hidden connotation in describing things and the ideological significance they hold. He depicts a particular segment of society through the description of "the office," which represents the actions and movements spanning decades in Algeria. It reflects the issues of authority and bureaucracy associated with the offices that shape the cultural landscape of the country. It also touches on the aspect of identity, specifically addressing the dilution that occurs in the cultural dimension. This includes the marginalization of intellectuals and the exploitation of the country's cultural, educational, and research resources, driven by prioritizing personal interests, particularly the pursuit of wealth and materialism, even within international cultural events. The novelist "exposes the aspects of social and political dysfunction, criticizing them in a manner that often culminates in denunciation and condemnation. The protest-like forms used in this novel demonstrate the extent of insult and invective directed towards authority, which, in the eyes of the novel's writers, is the main cause of deteriorating conditions and worsening social climates" (جمعة،

اتجاهات الرواية في المغرب العربي، 1999، صفحة 294). Consequently, they hold it responsible for all manifestations of decay that characterize their societies. The narrator confronts this reality with mockery in his descriptive style.

3.3 Description of the city (collective buildings)

The description of the external environment, such as the street or public places, moves away from being solely associated with the individual and becomes linked to the collective experience of a specific period. It reflects social aspects and offers a glimpse into the level of thinking within that particular society. Additionally, it carries a critical charge aimed at exposing the infrastructure and decision-makers. In the novel "Guardian of Shadows", there is a focus on buildings as symbols of individual or collective memory, accompanied by a satirical tone (محفوظ، 2009، صفحة 80). This is evident in the following excerpts:

- "This airport, which remained a mass of bare concrete, has been unable to settle into a specific form for over four years. It is similar to the capital's metro with its wide mouths and exits that lead to nothing. It is a stark symbolic representation of the bankruptcy of policies of deficiency and destruction" (الأعرج، حارسه الظلال، 2000، صفحة 64).

- "At the bottom of the grand Ministry of Interior building... I wish you good luck in facing this closed building of silence and oblivion. The building was indeed immense. It didn't resemble anything specific. It was old, filled with dampness and fear. Heavy, like this Friday that lacked meaning. Everything was empty except for the security men in their blue uniforms who

permanently guarded these important premises, anchored to the ground like stakes" (الأعرج، حارسه الظلال، 2000، صفحة 136). The novelist emphasizes the description with words like "closed, silence, fear, oblivion, dampness, and everything empty," which undoubtedly prompts the reader to engage with the language equation. It is a metaphor that allows the recipient to contribute their own meanings beyond the textual context and invokes all the possibilities they possess. Additionally, when the narrator mentions the fixation of the police officers, it conveys the extent to which people have turned into objects while carrying out their jobs for the sake of life. It reflects the perspective of the new capitalist world, which treats individuals as mere numbers or cogs in the immense social machine (علي هـ، 2008، صفحة 111). The purpose of employment is to give meaning to life, but it transforms them into the opposite of what is desired, into inert objects that lack awareness. They do not perceive anything.

- "We crossed the seafront only to find ourselves, after a weary walk, in front of the massive building of the Workers' Union." (الأعرج، حارسه الظلال، 2000، صفحة 92)

- "Do you see that tall building? It's called Al-Jawhara. It's a meaningless concrete block. A jewel is buried beneath it." (لأعرج، حارسه الظلال، 2000، صفحة 96)

This style goes beyond metaphor to juxtapose contradictions. In the excessive information provided (the name of the place) and (what is located beneath what is seen), in the weighty expressions of "Al-Jawhara" and "buried," there is a deliberate hint of sarcasm. It is customary to bury what is valuable, so the reader makes the connection

and realizes that the jewel is the one buried beneath.

- "And it opens up to the monument of the giant martyr, a solid concrete mass devoid of any spirit, a god who has lost his teeth and has no power except for his enormity, harsh features, and dense black shadows." (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 23). He also described in another part of the narrative, "Under the shadows of the massive and cold concrete mass of the martyr's monument, facing the sea and a large part of the prostrating city at its feet." (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 105).

While mentioning the construction of the martyr's monument, the narrator describes it as the prostrating city. However, it is humans who prostrate, and here it is a metaphor for the people residing in the city. It signifies the elevation of the value of things, in this case, the buildings that were accomplished through great efforts by individuals and funds that were supposed to serve the very humans themselves. This is what is known as the alienation of humans, where they are unable to achieve their goals and become mere instruments for the sake of those goals. "It is not possible for the reversal of this (upside-down world) to become possible except by ending the idolatry of commodities," in slightly different words. It requires ending alienation, ending reification. This necessitates awareness of what needs to be changed, and a rethinking of the world in a new way." (برونر، 2016، صفحة 45). The demand for change is hinted at in phrases embedded in the text, such as "the glaring symbolic model of the bankruptcy of the policy of deficiency and destruction" and the phrase "I wish you good luck in facing this

building closed in silence and oblivion." This style is clear and specific in its connotations, but to include it in the description of buildings aims to depict the reification of the human being governed by this authority. The purpose is to satirize the authority and the governing system.

The previous negative description of the Martyr's Monument carries a clear connotation of a critical ideological discourse directed towards the independent state that lost its martyrs in the pursuit of independence, sacrificing their lives for freedom and the stability of future generations. This meaning is further supported by the buried villa beneath the Jewel Building, a villa that holds the human heritage, history, and identity, buried under the "bitun" (concrete) - a term characterized by its negative description, constantly repeated by the narrator. This discourse represents a portrayal of the new literary discourse that remains within the framework of rejecting the slogans of power. It almost converges with "the artistic narrative structure at the horizon of the national imagination, imprinted with the struggle for independence, and the aspiration to establish an identity divided between a colonial past and a present marked by conflict over power, and a horizon for constructing a dynamic future that enables engagement with the era." (برادة، الرواية في المغرب العربي من أسئلة (التكون إلى مغامرة التجريب، 2006، صفحة 14). The writer, Wassini laredj, leads us towards a comprehensive critical perspective that relies on reality, revealing hidden aspects of individual identity and national identity, narrating their fragmentation and diminishment. This is because the nature of thinking has changed, where "thinking in

narrow self has become the foundation instead of thinking in broad self. The groundwork for this has been prepared for decades, and perhaps centuries, where trampled and marginalized identities were incorporated within the hegemonic identity. It is natural for them to reject all previous forms of identity and seek separation, in the midst of suitable international climates that they want to exploit until the end. The phenomenon can only be understood within these dimensions." (الأعرج، هويات الدم و الإقضاء) (المجاني، 2022)

We can infer that the concept of the street is characterized both by its internalization within the individual and by being characterized through it. It is an ugly street because "the ugliness of the Arab street is natural, while its beauty is artistic. It is determined by the feelings of the novelist and their position in society, as well as the extent of the freedom they enjoy. If we perceive the street through the lens of human psyche, rather than considering it merely as a strip of asphalt and sidewalks embraced by a group of cement buildings." (النايلسي، 1994،) (صفحة 68)

The exploration of the street that the character undertakes, along with their union with the place and its condition, highlights the temporal dimension in many of the mentioned passages. It represents a harmonious interplay between the narrative components, showcasing the aesthetic of contemporaneity (the personal-place-temporal) that emerges from the lens of the heart and the conveyance of emotions that interact with this place. It portrays events from within the self rather than externally, creating a balance among the four narrative elements.

3.4 Dominance of the individual object in the narrative

In Arabic literature, there are many texts that focus on a singular element, employing symbolic construction and repetition as a means to imbue that word or concept with significance within the entire text. In novels, despite their scarcity and the limited studies that recognize this phenomenon, the dominance of a singular element as a symbol in Arabic fiction becomes evident. The relationship with the specific element is considered as creating "relationships and connections that serve as a protective mechanism against the violent shocks that shake the internal structure of the anxious self. It is as if the thing itself stops the wheel of time and its rotation, resisting alienation, turmoil, and the fear of the inevitable end (death/annihilation)" (علي م.، 2022، صفحة 10). This is evident in some Arabic novels, such as the novel "Kiladat Al Korunful" (The Carnation Necklace) by Moroccan writer Zahra Karim, (أبونضال، 2006 (245 -252)، الصفحات). The symbolism of the platter appears in the novel "Al-Sahhn" (The Platter) by Jordanian writer Sameeha Khreis (صفحة 87، 2007، القواسمة). In these novels, the specific element dominates through extensive narrative pages, mentioning it, describing it, and providing information about its history. In the novel, the object appears dominant in its construction through extensive narrative pages, mentioning it, describing it, and providing information about its history.

Objects always surround humans, meaning individuals. When the narrative focuses on certain objects or provides detailed descriptions of them, it signifies their relevance to the events and becomes a

measure of the character's value, whether in traditional or modern narrative. In *Madame Bovary*, the objects precisely answer a question regarding the character. First, they clarify what this character can utilize. Secondly, they reveal the intimate relationship between her personality (the objects) and the character who possesses them. Finally, they serve as a repository for the character's dreams, illusions, and aspirations. Through all of this, we can sincerely grasp the truth of the character in moments of solitude. (محفوظ، 2009، صفحة 86)

a. Description of Cassia rose

The character cares about a plucked flower that she places on her desk every day, and the narrator emphasizes this relationship by dedicating a significant portion of the narrative to mentioning it, as seen in this excerpt: "I was engrossed in arranging my morning rose on my desk, the red Cassia rose... This Cassia rose forces my friend and neighbor, Karim Ludok, who gives me a ride every morning from my house to the Palace of Culture, to stop at the flower vendor... Over time, this practice has become a daily ritual that I perform regularly... Suddenly getting out of the car and acquiring the pre-prepared Cassia rose in a meticulously clean and preserved wrapping paper." (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 18)

The relationship between the character and their belongings serves as a bridge through which they can observe or grasp them in their true essence. "Objects, through their constant presence like a heater, or through our tracing of their history and tracking their fate, become themes that deepen the overall significance and support the growth and development of the narrative." (Mahfouz, 2009, p. 83)

And this is what happened to Hassan and the Cassia rose: "And what is the secret of this Cassia rose that is nothing more than an ordinary flower... These are my daily rituals that mean nothing to anyone else in this environment that has lost all justification for its existence. Cassia is Carmen's flower, no surprise there. Carmen is that dormant soul with its cruelty and tranquility in the depths." (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 18). In the text, this flower is the window through which we glimpse into the narrator's psyche and what is happening in his mind. This is highlighted by the phrase that gives an ideology that the character does not want to forget ("that means nothing to anyone else in this environment that has lost all justification for its existence"), thus making it his memory to which he returns. When he places it in front of him, it acts as a guardian of this memory. This adoption, in itself, represents the individual's reification and a compensation for the distancing of individuals and their substitution with objects.

- Over the course of three pages, the narrative intensifies the construction of symbols, aiming to firmly establish them in the reader's mind. While the reader follows the main storyline of the novel, another story unfolds, the story of the Cassia rose and along with it, the story of Hanna, his grandmother. "Hanna always swears that everything she tells is an absolute truth, untouched by falsehood. This is why she has preserved all the customs of the exiled Moriscos, the lion of the clouds and the exile who loved nothing more than his love for the Cassia rose " (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 20).

- "...And a small purple linen bag filled with the seeds of the red Cassia flower, for which he always dreamt of finding fertile land capable of quickly nurturing it. When he was in Granada, he possessed its magic and never hesitated to give it the taste of the red Cassia"... "For Hanna, the Cassia flower is a national pride for its purity and camaraderie, constantly repeating without boredom" (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 20).

- "You ignorant fools, blinded to the core, boasting about nationalism while being incapable of recognizing the enchantment of the Cassia flower, our eternal warm flame that must never be extinguished, the Cassia is our pride and our greatest deception. May you be cursed! Wake up before everything is lost and wasted. Whoever forgets the color of the Cassia flower forgets the color of their own soil" (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 21). The phrase "Cassia flower" extends throughout the novel as if it were a poetic necessity, dominating the writer and casting its threads upon the narrative and the reader, creating a dense symbolic meaning as dense as the number of words in the novel, and an epic meaning that manifests through the tales of the grandmother and the Moorish grandfather who carried it with him when he left his homeland.

This meaning is revealed gradually, adopting even the ordinary daily action, as we can see in the following phrases:

- "I had barely finished placing the flower on the desk when... and my rituals reached their conclusion. The Cassia has now found its place in the special vessel crafted from the glass of the Valley Gate, the friend of ancient neighborhoods" (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 21).

- "Oh, dear friend, the Cassia flower needs a glass that embraces it, transparent like a dewdrop, touched by skillful hands. Otherwise, the flower is vulnerable to withering, scattering, and death" (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 22).

In the hands of this unsettled or destabilized character, there is nothing but the technique of reference to psychology, as this non-self character (العيد، 2011، صفحة 45) is characterized by anxiety, fear, forgetfulness, nervousness, and hallucination, and lacks certainty in its relationships with its surroundings and those around it, causing it to withdraw into itself. (علي هـ، 2008، صفحة 111). This resembles immersing oneself in the description of everyday actions such as dressing, drinking, eating, sitting, turning, and gesturing, which may not require further elaboration. However, the writing chose this particular rhetoric to confront stagnation and the imposed state on the individual. "Furthermore, through its constant presence and significant impact on the reader—and even before that, on the writer—a thing can serve as a conduit for expressing a spiritual state, stemming from its utilization within contexts that signify inner unrest or serenity, much like a fireplace that is ever-present, alternately aflame or dormant." (محفوظ، 2009، صفحة 84)

The narrator of "Guardian of Shadows" remains focused on the repetitive act of bringing the flower from the florist and placing it next to him on his desk at the Ministry of Culture. Throughout the narrative, we encounter this discourse dispersed across its pages. This technique employed by the contemporary creator is a stylistic approach, crafting his own myths. It

inserts the novel into the stream of narratology, or alienation narrative, which enhances the value of the object.

b. Description of the cave

The cave represented the place where Miguel de Cervantes was imprisoned and where he wrote his novel "Don Quixote." In the narrative, the character Hsien and the Spanish journalist, the grandson of Cervantes, search for it, symbolizing the beginning of the story and the mystery that unfolds in the external and internal images of the city. However, the formation of this symbolism gradually emerges through a stylistic interplay between description and hidden ideological discourse embedded within dialogues and descriptions. From an artistic standpoint, "something" is lost through it: a long history, identity, and a global heritage. Let us delve into the excerpts to unravel the descriptive style:

- "But now my greatest task begins, in the actual places where he was taken in this city—the port, the cave, the old city—and everything that is useful to understand this exceptional experience lived by Cervantes." (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 33)

- "The cave of Cervantes, which has turned into a garbage dump, [] expands every day like chronic cancer, covering the hill that bears the name of Cervantes until its very end." (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 41) This suggests that the hill retains its name while the overall image is lost due to the garbage dump, reflecting a continuous policy of erasing heritage, history, and identity.

- "It compelled me to delay the story of the cave, our tragic image, [] whenever I narrated it, it left a bitter taste in my throat

and deep wounds like disappointment." (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 41).

- "The cheerful guest suggested including a visit to Cervantes' cave in his itinerary and insisted on it." (الأعرج، حارسة، 2000، صفحة 42).

- "It is certain that he believed the cave to be a tourist attraction that Cervantes' enthusiasts dream of seeing at least once in their lifetime." (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 42). What foreigners think of the cave as an important world heritage site reflects the significance of heritage to others and the marginalization and erasure of it in Algeria.

- "How can a garbage dump transform into a museum housing the commemorative plaque of Cervantes?" (الأعرج، حارسة الظلال، 2000، صفحة 64).

The journey of the cave story leads us through a tragic image that deeply affects Hsien, the cultural advisor. The narrator portrays it with words full of defeat, dissatisfaction, and even helplessness.

4. Conclusion:

The Algerian novel ventures into experimentation through the element of language, especially the new rhetorical style that must keep up with emerging subjects due to the progress of the present era. In this research, we explore the technique of Reification through description: describing characters with object attributes and describing the surroundings using human attributes instead, such as buildings and personal belongings. Ultimately, we arrive at the following points:

- Alienation prevailed in the narrative, causing people to drift apart and lose their way from values, beliefs, and the human dimensions of relationships.

- The main character appeared as a defeated individual, especially the educated character who exposes the flaws and abuses occurring within the offices of decision-makers, and the pursuit of material interests by those in power. They manipulate the simple individual, enslaving them in order to obtain even the most basic rights of life. Meanwhile, the country falls into a state of destruction and chaos.

- The writer skillfully crafted an aesthetic style through vivid descriptions, employing a seamlessly woven and impactful language that serves to propel the

narrative forward. With the clever use of satire, they endowed inanimate objects with human qualities and reduced humans to mere objects, creating a powerful sense of irony and offering thought-provoking social commentary.

- The descriptive style carries a captivating energy that engages the reader in a dialogue, opening up the reception to the narrative's immersive and gap-filling approach. In this way, the modern descriptive style of the novel invites multiple interpretations, allowing for a diverse range of readings.

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