

# Moral Values In The Iraqi Novel. Beginnings and Developments

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***Abstract:** This research deals with the moral values in the Iraqi novel, where it is known from its beginnings, and then the subsequent developments, especially after 2003. The research also seeks to briefly compare the moral values in the Iraqi novel and the western novel, and whether there is a difference between what the Iraqi novel contains and others. In addition to introducing the usefulness of reading novels and the extent of their impact on the reader. The research pointed to some examples of contemporary Iraqi novels that carry moral values among their contents when depicting the modern Iraqi reality. The research also pointed to the negative values in the novel, is it an important pillar in it or is it a reference to what exists in real reality far from fiction, the extent of the psychological impact of all values on the reader and his influence on the characters of the novel and interaction with them, and finding out what the writer wanted through storytelling, and what are his goals that he pursues in addition to the fact that the novel is just for fun or there are multiple purposes behind it.*

**Keywords:** Values, Novel, Novelist, Characters, Readers

## Introduction To The Iraqi Novel:

The Iraqi novel is one of the literary masterpieces that carries a lot of wonderful moral values and highlights the human and community life in Iraq. These values are highlighted in the Iraqi novel through the main characters in the stories and novels, which express their attitudes, actions and dealings with others.

Most critics date that the first successful attempt to write an Iraqi novel is the novel “Jalal Khalid” by the Iraqi storyteller Mahmoud Ahmed al-Sayed, published in 1928. But the novelist Ghaib Tohma Farman is called the father of the Iraqi novel and the novel “The Palm and the neighbors” by Ghaib Tohma Farman, released in 1966 is the beginning of the Iraqi novel, and it was represented theatrically in 1975 by the troupe of the Modern Art Theater in Baghdad, while the novel “The Distant return” by the Iraqi novelist Fuad al-Tikrali (1927-2008), issued in 1981, is one of the most important and prominent signs in the history of the Iraqi and Arab novel.

We can say that the fiction literature presented by the previous writers benefited from the life values in Iraqi society by dealing with events and situations that would highlight these life values, in a way that makes the reader recognize and be affected by them. It also motivates the reader to think about these values and their applications in our daily life, by addressing events and situations that encourage these values in a way that encourages the reader to think and reflect. It concludes by presenting the final results of the main characters in the novel, in a way that inspires the reader and encourages him to follow these human values in his daily life. It also helps to spread cultural and moral awareness among the reader, through the cultural and civilizational values conveyed by fiction and highlighting them in an awareness-raising and educational way.

## What Is Meant By Moral Values?

Moral values mean the degree of importance of something or an action, with the aim of determining which actions are better to do or which way is better to live, and there is a debate about whether some values that are not clearly defined physiologically, such as altruism are intrinsic values, and whether some of them, such as possessiveness, should be classified as vices or virtues. Moral values can be considered transcultural and exist in all societies, value systems form basic beliefs and principles that determine what is right and wrong in human behavior.

One of the great moral values that stands out in the Iraqi novel is justice. Justice is a fundamental value in Iraqi society, and it is manifested in the Iraqi novel through the embodiment of the main characters of justice in their dealings with others, whether in public or private life.

The value of honesty also stands out in the Iraqi novel, where it is a basic quality in the main characters, and this is represented by honest dealing with others and at the same time honesty with oneself, and this expresses courage in dealing with facts and standing firm in the face of injustice.

Also, the value of humanity stands out in the Iraqi novel, which is manifested in the sympathy of the main characters with others and in their help and support, as well as this value appears in the compassion, kindness and tenderness that is embodied in dealing with people.

The value of patriotism is also highlighted in the Iraqi novel, patriotism is an important value in Iraqi society, and it manifests itself in attachment to the homeland, loving it and working to improve its condition, and this expresses a sense of belonging to the homeland and the people.

Thus, we can say that the Iraqi novel carries a set of wonderful moral values, which expresses the human and community life in Iraq, and embodies the values of justice, honesty, humanity and patriotism. These values help to build a better, more developed and sophisticated society, help to achieve peace, stability and peaceful coexistence among people. Hence, the value of fiction literature in the process of psycho - social construction stands out, contrary to what politics puts forward.

A novelist who carries high values can also project himself on his novel work through several ways, including: focusing on high human values such as justice, fairness, truth, honesty, loyalty, compassion, kindness, tolerance, cooperation, love, peace and goodness through the embodiment of the main characters in his novel, which express these high values and characterize them in their attitudes, actions and dealings with others. In addition, there is a focus on humanitarian and social issues that express these lofty values and that need solutions, change and improvement. The emphasis is on highlighting the noble values in the events and situations that occur in his novel, which express integrity, sincerity, honesty, sacrifice, altruism and charity.

It should be noted that the novel is not only entertainment, but it can be a way to spread high values and influence readers positively. In these ways, a novelist who carries high values can project himself on his novel work and achieve his goals in consolidating these values in the soul and society.

By all this, it is impossible to judge the objectivity of any literary work without thoroughly examining it. But if a literary work is aimed at spreading lofty values and influencing readers positively, then it can be objective in that respect. However, themes, characters and events should be approached objectively, not being biased to one side, or biased to a certain opinion, so that a literary work can effectively and positively influence readers.

And as an important note, yes, immoral values can exist in some Arabic novels in general. The novel as a form of literature reflects reality and expresses life experiences, therefore some novels can include content that contradicts the adopted moral principles. Some Arabic novels may include scenes of violence, depictions of immoral behaviors such as cheating and deception, and illegal or socially unacceptable practices. However, we must understand that the presence of immoral values in novels does not mean that they are accepted or should be promoted, they can be part of a realistic depiction of humanity and a warning against immoral behaviors.

### **Subsequent Developments On The Iraqi Novel:**

The author Dia al-Khalidi says in his topic: The Iraqi novel after April 2003, published on July 31, 2022 in the New World newspaper:

“The spaces of freedom seemed large, and their boundaries expanded according to the novelist's estimates, after they were drawing from the outside, which gave a high ceiling for inspiration and imagination, and a greater ability to draw characters that were very relevant to the new climate, and events were proceeding from the moment as well as what is related to the histories of the modern Iraqi state.. Undoubtedly, such a climate pushed the novel to get closer to the human being, and the margin became a fruitful and main material in many writings. After April 2003, the stormy transformations at the state level in Iraq seemed to have a comprehensive impact on large sectors, including literature, and the novel in particular. This art has been active in investing change and pursuing topics that were previously kept under wraps for more than four decades.”

The author also adds: “on the other hand, we should point to the release of novels that tried to break out of the strict framework in the projects of the eighties and nineties of the last century, and through careful investment of all that possible literary theories offer in distracting or breaking the image of reality into fragments that are difficult to collect at first glance”.

It is also possible to benefit from what the writer Mazen al-Mamouri pointed out in his article “The Iraqi novel.. Transformations and rich achievements” published on the Al-Mayadeen website on December 19, 2018, says: “The researcher Najm Abdullah records in his book “Index of the Iraqi novel” since 2003 to 2014, it was published more than 470 novels, a number that indicates the spread of the culture of novel writing in the literary medium and dispensing with the field of poetry, which Iraq is known as the most important expressive model in the Arab region. The Iraqi novel has reached its highest level in the art of fiction and has received international awards”.

While critic jihad Fadel wrote an article entitled “The role of the novel in defending values”, published on the Al-Raya website: “The relationship of the novel with morality is due to the fact that the writer is very attentive to readers, standards and behavior in all aspects of social life, and he turns all these data into material for his novel and uses it as a pillar of its realism, reality practically includes multiple normative systems and active in social customs that make it a place of contradictions, and the novel does not necessarily depict these contradictions directly, nor express them in words, but reflects them through the ladder of values and its grades”.

### **What Is The Benefit Of Novels?**

We can summarize a set of benefits of reading novels and stories of various kinds, whether by an ordinary reader, a literary critic, or an academic specialist, including the following:

Improve language skills; novels expose readers to a wide range of vocabulary and sentence structures, which can improve their language skills and make them clearer. Expanding knowledge while taking readers to different places and times, allowing them to learn about different cultures, historical events and social issues. In addition to stimulating readers' imagination and creativity, they have to imagine characters, places and events in their minds.

Reading novels gives a form of mental exercise that maintains brain activity and reactivity, which can help prevent cognitive decline. It provides readers with a form of escape and entertainment, allowing them to relax and unwind.

Some results indicate that reading in general trains minds and educates the psyche, and helps to get rid of mental stress and fatal thinking that many depressed patients suffer from. It is no secret that the novel tries to reveal the secrets of the human psyche, and helps the reader to understand the world and others more deeply, and this can lead to improving the reader's mental health based on many researches in this regard.

### **Deductive Formation In The Use Of Narrative Elements:**

A novelist can use a set of elements, the purpose of which is a set of motives and benefits that cause them later as a narrative structure, that distinguishes each writer from others, and each novel from others, including:

**Organic:** This involves focusing on text analysis, thinking about hidden meanings and messages.

**Discussion:** The novel can be discussed with others to understand different points of view from the alternative.

**Writing:** Ideas can be written and analyzed to enhance impact and recall.

**Research:** The cultural background of the novel and the author can be researched to understand the context in which the novel was written.

**Focus on characters and events:** Characters and events can be focused on understanding messages and meanings.

Using these elements and reasons, the benefits of novels can contribute and be better understood as long as the novelist works according to disciplined semantic contexts, including the psychology of the work or its philosophy and the best goal pursued by the writer.

The tracker can notice that the Iraqi novel is centered on moral values at levels that are often close to the difference form or content. These values are an essential part of the social and cultural fabric of the Iraqi people. Modern Iraqi novels reflect many social, political and moral issues facing Iraqi society, and directly or indirectly address important moral values such as justice, freedom, equality, humanity, tolerance, honesty, courage, altruism, charity and human solidarity. These values are fundamental in building healthy and stable societies, and help to strengthen social relationships and interaction between individuals.

These values shape the characters of the novel and determine their behavior and actions, and significantly affect the development of events in the novel and its course, which leads to play a decisive role in the construction of characters and the development of events in Iraqi novels.

Based on the above, some contemporary Iraqi novels can be mentioned as research models that focus on moral values, including:

The novel “The Wine” by the Iraqi novelist (Anam kji), in which the system of moral values compares the monarchy and the regime of Saddam Hussein.

The novel "Life" by the Iraqi writer (Safa bidis), which deals with the story of the boy "Yahya" and highlights moral values in an easy and understandable language for young people.

The novel "As Colored Rain Or More" by the Iraqi writer (Ahmed abughazi), which exposes the moral values and challenges faced by man under the American occupation of Iraq.

### **Similarities And Differences In Moral Values In The Iraqi And Western novel:**

It is not possible to say for sure that there is a difference between moral values in the Iraqi novel and the western novel in general, since morality is universal values related to human behavior, dealing with others and society in general. It is possible that the themes of novels and writing styles may differ between different cultures, but this does not necessarily mean that there is a difference in the moral values addressed in the novels. It is worth noting that the Iraqi novel deals with various topics, including war and socio-political reality, and uses various methods of writing, including traditional and modern ones.

Yes, socio-cultural values influence moral values in the novel, since the novel reflects the socio-cultural reality of the society from which it comes, expresses the values and beliefs that people adhere to in this society. It is possible that the moral values dealt with in the novels differ between different cultures, due to the cultural and social differences between these cultures. It is worth noting that the novel may play an important role in conveying moral and cultural values to readers, may be influential and contribute to the formation of their conscience and guide their behavior, both directly and indirectly.

The moral values in the novel can also be determined through the analysis of the characters; as the characters in the novel reflect the moral values that the writer adheres to and the society to which he belongs, and express human behavior, dealing with others and society in general.

By analyzing the characters of the novel, it is possible to identify the moral values addressed in the novel, and discuss the extent to which they influence the events and behaviors in the novel. It is worth noting that this type of analysis is often used in academic studies to analyze novels and understand their moral and cultural contents. Moral values in the novel can change depending on the development of the characters, since the characters in the novel develop with the development of events and are exposed to challenges and conflicts that affect their moral values.

### **Negative Values In The Novel:**

Some results indicate that the values in the novel are characterized by multiplicity, difference and relativity, and their classification into positive and negative values is not absolute, but is subject to the criteria of the environment and history; therefore, it can be said that negative values may be part of the message carried by the novel, but not the only part of it, but they can be part of the multiplicity of values around which the novel text is centered.

The consequences resulting from the representation of values in the novel depend on the context in which these values are represented. It is possible that the consequences will be positive or negative, depending on the results on the topic. A possible positive consequence is to stimulate the reader to reflect and reflect on the values and beliefs that the narrative text carries, expand his intellectual and cultural horizons. As for the possible negative consequences, they may consist in strengthening some negative values in society, confirming some negative stereotypes about certain social groups.

It is possible that the representation of negative values in the novel motivates the reader to think about the negative consequences of these values, and therefore can lead to a change in his worldview and others. It is worth noting that the impact of the novel on the reader depends on the narrative text and on the reader's personality itself. It is possible to be exposed the reader has some negative emotions such as fear, anxiety and stress as a result of the representation of negative values in the novel.