

Cultural Criticism of the Novel “Bayt Al-Qadi Al-Arab Al-Akhir” by Riyadh Al-Qadi Based on the Frankfurt School

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Abstract

Cultural criticism is a modern approach influenced by the foundations of contemporary critical schools such as sociology and discourse analysis. This method addresses social issues through an artistic and critical lens, aiming to analyze and resolve them through the works of committed writers. Among the various schools of cultural criticism, the Frankfurt School stands out for its emphasis on critiquing society, knowledge systems, and power structures. It seeks to uncover the underlying disorders and crises within the social fabric—especially in conflict-ridden contexts like Iraq. The Frankfurt School is rooted in radical critical theory and focuses on deconstructing hegemonic discourse and the mechanisms behind mass culture production. In this context, Riyadh al-Qadi, in his novel “Bayt Al-Qadi Al-Arab Al-Akhir”, critically explores societal issues, the nature of power, and the destructive impact of dominant ideologies on Iraqi society, shedding light on systemic oppression and human rights violations. The novel’s characters are drawn from the painful reality of Iraq, offering readers insight into the customs, traditions, and prevailing ideologies of the society. This study, through a descriptive-analytical approach and within the framework of the Frankfurt School’s theory, analyzes the novel in terms of its portrayal of power and the role of ideology in shaping the destiny of the Iraqi people. Findings reveal that the author, through his deep awareness of the human condition in his society and by highlighting cultural disruptions, strives to inspire transformation in the current situation, while also depicting the hopes and aspirations of the people for liberation from hegemonic culture and the attainment of freedom and social equality.

Keywords: Cultural Criticism, Frankfurt School, Iraqi Society, Riyadh Al-Qadi, the novel “Bayt Al-Qadi Al-Arab Al-Akhir”.

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