



POSTMODERN PARODY IN THE IRAQI ALI BADER'S NOVEL "PAPA SARTRE"

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Abstract:

This research paper investigates the impact of existentialism on Iraqi society, with a particular focus on the sixties generation as depicted in Ali Bader's novel "Papa Sartre." The study explores the use of parody as a postmodern literary device to satirically critique the influence of existentialist philosophy on individuals and society. By examining the negative repercussions of existentialist philosophy on societies, especially the Iraqi sixties generation, this research delves into the satirical critique embedded in Bader's novel. The primary focus is on parody as a means to highlight the superficial adoption and harmful consequences of certain philosophical ideologies, such as existentialism, within intellectual and societal contexts. The paper aims to demonstrate how individuals and communities can be swayed by philosophical theories without fully understanding their implications. Through the use of parody, the novel encourages readers to engage with the deeper nuances of its narrative, serving as a cautionary tale against the uncritical acceptance of imported ideologies. Furthermore, the research emphasizes the role of literary works in confronting and interrogating critical issues fostering social awareness and discourse. By highlighting the insidious spread of harmful ideologies across generations, the paper advocates for vigilance among future generations to protect against the influence of such detrimental philosophies.

Keywords: Iraqi postmodern literature, Ali Bader, *Papa Sartre*, parody

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1. Introduction

This introduction provides a concise overview of Ali Bader's background and his acclaimed novel "*Papa Sartre*," outlining its satirical approach to critiquing Iraqi intellectuals' emulation of French existentialism. Born in Baghdad in 1964, Ali Bader is a renowned novelist with a background in Western Philosophy and French Literature from Baghdad University. His debut work, "*Papa Sartre*," garnered significant recognition, including the State Prize for Literature in Baghdad and the Prize of Abulkassim al-Shabbi for the Novel in Tunisia. This novel catapulted him to international acclaim by satirically dissecting the futile attempts of Iraqi intellectuals to adopt French existentialism (The Arab British Centre.com).

The narrative centers on Abd ar-Rahman, the protagonist, whose unsuccessful attempt to study in France leads him back to Iraq with ambitions to establish an existentialist movement inspired by his idol, Jean-Paul Sartre. Convinced of his physical resemblance to the philosopher and boasting about marriage to Germaine, whom he claims is Sartre's cousin, Abd ar-Rahman embarks on a misguided mission to indoctrinate his country's intellectuals.

The novel's plot unfolds against the backdrop of Abd ar-Rahman's indulgent lifestyle, characterized by excesses in drinking, debauchery, and nightclub visits, juxtaposed with existential angst and contemplation of suicide. Narrated by a biographer chosen by his assumed friends, the story portrays a bewildered young man searching for meaning amidst the societal upheavals of 1960s Baghdad.

"*Papa Sartre*" serves as a parody, exposing the pretensions and extravagances of pseudo-philosophers within Iraqi intellectual circles, while also offering insights into the cultural and intellectual milieu of the time (Abd Al-Ridha 3-4).

1.1 Parody

In defining parody, various scholars offer nuanced perspectives: Parody originates from the ancient Greek word "*parodia*," consisting of the prefix "*para*," meaning "*against*" or "*beside*," and the noun "*ode*," denoting "*song*" (Hutcheon 32). Moreover, Hutcheon describes parody as a form of gentle mockery, emphasizing its association with humor (Hutcheon 34). Hutcheon further characterizes parody as a quintessential postmodern form, highlighting its ability to simultaneously incorporate and critique the material it parodies (Hutcheon 11).

However, Consolini defines parody as the comedic re-writing of an existing text (Consolini 2). But Dentith views parody as a mode of double-voicing, acknowledging its potential to challenge and undermine the original text (Dentith 94).

Then, parody, stemming from the Greek term "*parodia*," combines the prefix "*para*" denoting "*against*" or "*beside*" with the noun "*ode*" representing "*song*." Consolini simplifies parody as the comedic reinterpretation of an existing text, while Hutcheon emphasizes its humorous nature, framing it as a form of gentle mockery. Dentith views parody as a mode of double-voicing, acknowledging its capacity to challenge the original text.

Hutcheon further positions parody as a quintessential postmodern art form, noting its ability to both incorporate and critique the material it parodies (Kreuz & et al., 97).

2. Literature Review

This subsection discusses the aim of a study by Caiani to introduce Western readers to significant Arabic novels written since 1979 by authors such as Muhammad Barrada, Idwar al-Kharrat, Ilyas Khuri, and Fuad al-Takarli. Despite their contributions to contemporary Arabic fiction, these authors remain relatively obscure to non-Arab readers. Many of their innovative works have not been thoroughly analyzed, leaving Western students of Arabic fiction unaware of their literary merit. These writers represent literary tendencies that diverge from the canonical novelistic form established by influential early works like those of Naguib Mahfouz. Mahfouz's passing in 2006 should prompt literary critics to explore the new trends within the Arabic novel, a literary form that Mahfouz demonstrated to be adept at addressing contemporary issues. While acknowledging the socio-political context of this literature, the study primarily focuses on close textual analysis (Caiani 1).

It discusses Caiani's objective of familiarizing Western readers with significant Arabic novels written after 1979 by authors such as Muhammad Barrada, Idwar al-Kharrat, Ilyas Khuri, and Fuad al-Takarli. Despite their contributions to contemporary Arabic fiction, these authors remain relatively unknown to non-Arab audiences, and their innovative works have often gone unanalyzed. Caiani highlights that these writers diverge from the established novelistic form pioneered by Naguib Mahfouz, whose death in 2006 underscores the need for literary critics to explore emerging trends in Arabic literature. While recognizing the socio-political backdrop, the study primarily emphasizes close textual analysis of these novels.

In "*Papa Sartre*," characters engage in individual quests for power and strength, each attempting to infuse their lives with purpose and significance. However, their efforts ultimately reveal the futility of their pursuits, emphasizing the absurdity inherent in their relentless search for meaning in a world devoid of inherent value (Enaya 118).

By depicting the characters' struggles against the backdrop of existential absurdity, Ali Bader invites readers to confront the existential dilemmas embedded in the human condition. The novel poignantly explores the existential angst and disillusionment experienced by individuals grappling with the inherent absurdity of existence.

Ultimately, the portrayal of absurdity in "*Papa Sartre*" underscores the novel's thematic exploration of existential themes, encouraging readers to engage with the profound questions of meaning and purpose in a seemingly indifferent universe.

A prominent theme in the novel is the challenging circumstances faced by Arab intellectuals. Through the protagonist's journey and interactions with other characters, the novel highlights the struggles, frustrations, and disillusionments experienced by intellectuals in Arab society. This theme explores various dimensions, such as the conflict between tradition and modernity, the pressure to conform to societal expectations, and

the challenges of pursuing intellectual endeavors in unsupportive or unrecognizing environments. Abd ar-Rahman's failed attempts to ignite an existentialist movement symbolize the broader difficulties Arab intellectuals face in asserting their identities and ideologies within a complex socio-political context. The novel also emphasizes the tension between individual aspirations and societal constraints, offering deep insights into the internal and external conflicts faced by Arab intellectuals (Abd Al-Ridha 3-4).

The novel's depiction of the plight of Arab intellectuals' centers on the exploration of philosophical currents from the West during the 1950s and 1960s. During this period, the influx of Western philosophies and movements, including existentialism, profoundly influenced Iraqi intellectuals. Notably, existentialist ideas were disseminated through translated literary works and philosophical publications from Lebanese publishing houses, contributing to the emergence of new intellectual currents among Arab intellectuals (Al-Ghad Channel).

Existentialism, with its diverse interpretations and influences, played a significant role in shaping the intellectual landscape of the era. Despite the difficulty in pinpointing its origins, figures like Søren Kierkegaard and Jean-Paul Sartre are often regarded as pivotal in defining existentialist thought. Sartre, in particular, is prominently featured in the novel, emphasizing humanism in his works, notably in "*Existentialism is Humanism*," (Enaya 118).

3. Theory

3.1 Existentialism

Existentialism, as espoused by the philosophical movement Sartre represents, revolves around the foundational notion that existence precedes essence. This concept posits that individuals are born devoid of predetermined identity or purpose and must shape their lives through their actions alone. Within this framework, Sartre argues that human existence is characterized by freedom and responsibility, with individuals acting as subjects within the constraints of their environment. Central to existentialism is the rejection of absolute moral truths, as human life is deemed viable only when individuals acknowledge their autonomy and the consequences of their choices (Sartre 4).

While there are various interpretations of existentialism with differing historical scopes, the narrowest definition typically encompasses Sartre and other French philosophers like Albert Camus, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Gabriel Marcel, and Simone de Beauvoir (Sartre's partner in later life). Furthermore, many commentators consider figures such as Søren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers, and novelist Fyodor Dostoyevsky as either early existentialists or forerunners of the movement. Existentialism, as presented in the philosophical discourse by Sartre, asserts that individuals are born without inherent identities or purposes and must shape their lives through their actions. This philosophy underscores human freedom and responsibility, rejecting absolute moral truths in favor of personal autonomy. While existentialism has various historical interpretations, it typically includes Sartre and other French philosophers like Camus, Merleau-Ponty, Marcel, and de Beauvoir. Moreover,

figures such as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Jaspers, and Dostoyevsky are often considered either early existentialists or precursors to the movement. Additionally, figures such as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Jaspers, and Dostoyevsky are often considered either early existentialists or precursors to the movement (English 153-6).

Bader's novel vividly captures the experiences of Iraqi intellectuals during the 1950s and 1960s, particularly highlighting their engagement with Western philosophical movements. Influential figures such as Sartre, De Beauvoir, Darwin, and Nietzsche played a significant role during this era, with their works being widely translated and distributed by Lebanese publishers. Arab intellectuals deeply explored these philosophies, contributing articles and translations to periodicals like *Arabic Literature and Writer* (Abd Al-Ridha 3-4).

Existentialist thought is interpreted differently by various thinkers and writers. English (1966) notes that there are significantly distinctive perspectives on existentialism, suggesting that it can be viewed as a philosophical school, a literary movement, or an attitude toward life, expressed in various ways. In studying existentialism, one would often reference contemporary existentialists like Karl Jaspers, Gabriel Marcel, and Martin Heidegger, Albert Camus for his existentialist ideas in literature, Soren Kierkegaard in the 19th century, and Jean-Paul Sartre in the 20th century (Enaya 118).

Iraqi intellectuals were profoundly influenced by these foreign philosophical ideas, leading to the emergence of new and diverse intellectual movements. The 1960s were marked by a wide variety of thought and literature among these intellectuals, with existentialism being a particularly impactful theory during this period, as depicted in Bader's novel.

Tracing the origins of existentialism is challenging, as early figures like St. Augustine of Hippo and Blaise Pascal are sometimes considered precursors to existentialism, alongside Nietzsche and Dostoevsky. However, Kierkegaard is commonly recognized as the "*father of existentialism*," with Jean-Paul Sartre known for his definitive contributions to philosophy (Enaya 118).

Jean-Paul Sartre, a pioneering existentialist frequently referenced in the novel, emphasized humanism in his works. His notable book, *Existentialism is Humanism*, underscores these themes (Jennings 2). Robert Olson, in *An Introduction to Existentialism*, notes that existentialism is often perceived as a philosophy rooted in nihilism and profound despair (Olson 13).

Existentialism is considered one of the most thrilling movements in contemporary philosophy. Many have contemplated its key themes, such as the roots of despair and suffering, overcoming adversity, the boundaries of reason, individual and societal interactions, authenticity, death, and freedom (Olson 7).

In Ali Bader's novel "*Papa Sartre*," the theme of absurdity is prominently depicted, reflecting the existential struggle to find inherent meaning and value in life. Drawing on Camus's definition, absurdity arises from the human pursuit of meaning in a universe perceived to lack intrinsic value. Although not everyone may align with Camus's perspective, the novel illustrates characters grappling with the existential challenge of navigating an apparently meaningless existence (Dotterweich 7).

However, existentialism is not without controversy, as it has been misconstrued as a philosophy of nihilism and despair. Yet, existentialist themes continue to captivate individuals, prompting reflections on fundamental aspects of human existence, such as despair, suffering, freedom, and authenticity (Jennings 2).

The novel, through its portrayal of Iraqi intellectuals grappling with existentialist ideas, reflects the broader challenges and complexities faced by Arab intellectuals in navigating the convergence of Western philosophical currents and their cultural and societal contexts. This analysis of the plight of Arab intellectuals within the novel underscores the profound impact of existentialist thought and its enduring relevance in contemporary philosophical discourse (Al-qaraghli).

4. Methodology

In the methodology section of the research paper, I emphasize the importance of selecting an appropriate research methodology for data collection (Ali, Gul, and Noor Ul-Ain 124). Furthermore, I specify that the content analysis conducted in my study is qualitative and descriptive in nature. The outline is that the analysis focuses on the element of postmodern parody within the novel. Thus, this analysis involves examining sampled passages and extracts from the novel to explore the use of parody qualitatively and descriptively.

4.1. Research Problem

Although many philosophies are generally associated with morals, values, wisdom, and principles of the universe and its purposeful existence, there are numerous philosophies that have harmful impacts on thoughts and societies. An example of this is existentialism, which has had detrimental effects on some societies, including the Iraqi sixties' generation, a subject that is satirically critiqued through the element of parody. This research aims to examine this issue in detail.

4.2. Research Objectives

- 1) To know what is parody? And to examine its use as a postmodern element in the novel.
- 2) To understand how Ali Bader utilizes parody in his novel.
- 3) To identify what are the features and characteristics of the Iraqi sixties generation and how were their thoughts influenced by imported philosophies.
- 4) To demonstrate how some intellectuals and individuals are influenced by certain philosophies and theories without deep understanding, and to highlight the harmful impact of such philosophies, theories, and thoughts.

4.3. Value and Contributions

4.3.1 Literary Contributions

- To draw readers' attention to the deeper features of novels that employ the element of parody.

- To illustrate how a literary work can address and treat critical issues.

4.3.2 Social Contributions

- To caution future generations about harmful thoughts and imported philosophies, encouraging them to avoid being influenced by them.

4.4 Data analysis

In the analysis section, I search into the themes present in the novel, focusing specifically on two: the plight of Arab intellectuals and absurdity. Overall, this analysis of the data highlights the role of parody in shaping the characterization and tone of the novel, while also hinting at broader themes and motifs that may be explored in subsequent passages. In the first lines from Ali Bader's novel "Papa Sartre," the author employs parody as a literary device to satirically portray the characters Hanna Yusif and Nunu Behar. describes them parodically:

"The wicked devil Hanna Yusif, the macabre-looking gravedigger, and his depraved friend—whom he refers to by the curious Biblical name of Nunu Behar—were the ones who convinced me to write the biography of an Iraqi philosopher, who lived in al-Sadriah district in the sixties. In truth, those two charlatans were not lacking a love of philosophy, nor were they without enthusiasm and genius. They were, however, truly short on honor and relied without exception on depravity." (Bader 6).

Through exaggerated and caricatured descriptions, Bader mocks the characters, portraying Hanna Yusif as a "wicked devil" and a "macabre-looking gravedigger," while Nunu Behar is described as a "depraved friend" with a curious Biblical name. The use of parody in this passage serves several purposes. Firstly, it creates a tone of humor and satire, drawing the reader in with its playful mockery of the characters. Secondly, it underscores the absurdity and exaggerated nature of the characters, setting the stage for a narrative that defies conventional norms and expectations. Additionally, by depicting the characters in a parodic manner, Bader subverts traditional notions of heroism and nobility, instead highlighting their flaws and shortcomings and unreliable historical accounts. As the narrator notes,

"I met people who admired all those who had departed us and would provide wondrous information, so distorted that it was impossible to trace their fantasies back to the original reality. I had to sift through this information, clean it, and keep track of the simple and temporary changes it underwent." (Bader 15)

The narrator's quest to gather information about the philosopher's life leads to a humorous encounter regarding the character Hanna Yusif's title as "Father." The narrator's assumption about Hanna Yusif's parental status is challenged when he asks an Assyrian individual about Father Hanna's house, only to be met with laughter and surprise. The narrator is surprised when an Assyrian man laughs at the idea, clarifying

that Hanna is not a Father. The Assyrian man laughed heartily and said, "Who told you he's a father?" His wife pointed out a large green tree and said, "There it is" (Bader 7).

In another example from the text on page 7, the character Nunu Behar offers a satirical commentary on the philosopher's lack of published books, portraying him as presumptuous. When asked about the philosopher's publications, Behar replies, "No, none at all. This presumptuous fellow did not write a single book in his whole life." Surprised, the narrator questions this, to which Behar responds, "Every philosopher is presumptuous," adding that some philosophers write books, making it easier for biographers, while others do not, forcing biographers to fabricate and embellish their subjects (Bader 7-8). The use of parody in Nunu Behar's dialogue serves to mock the philosopher's perceived arrogance and the challenges it poses for the biographer.

They assure the writer that the philosopher's life is straightforward and uncomplicated. "But please, don't think that this is going to be a difficult project. His life was simple, extremely simple" (Bader 8). Hanna Yusif humorously remarks that the philosopher was often drunk and spent his time on trivial matters.

"But please, don't think that this is going to be a difficult project. His life was simple, extremely simple." (Bader 8)

The writer senses that Nunu Bahar and Hanna Yusif want him to distort parts of the philosopher's biography instead of presenting the truth. He feels they are concealing something and is determined not to repeat the mistakes of previous, dishonest biographers. Hanna stated,

"You must know that truth and bogus facts are not necessarily a contradiction in your kind of work. Anyway, you're not being paid to write a true story.... Write whatever you want, and make this donkey greater than Sartre himself. I couldn't care less. You and I can decide on the important details of his life." (Bader 11)

Hanna's disregard for accuracy in the biography, exemplified by his statement "You're not being paid to write a true story," underscores the novel's exploration of historical narratives' unreliability and truth manipulation for personal gain.

The writer's response, asserting his intention to depict both the philosopher's greatness and commonness, reflects his commitment to integrity despite pressure to embellish or distort the truth

The narrator, reflecting on Jawad's appearance, compares it to that of a pickpocket, emphasizing his harsh and wrinkled features, dark reddish skin, and drooping moustache stained yellow from cigarettes. This description serves to exaggerate Jawad's physical attributes, portraying him as unkempt and disheveled:

"Hanna Yusif had chosen him to be my companion and watch my every move. Jawad's face resembled a pickpocket" (Bader 5).

Moreover, the narrator notes that Jawad is wearing clothes that do not fit him well and appear to be worn for the first time. This detail adds to the comedic effect, suggesting a lack of attention to personal grooming and an overall sense of disarray.

"I could not help laughing at the sight, but he responded to my laughter with a smile that seemed to say that he was feeling important for the first time in his life, or that he was proud to be undertaking an important task. I smiled back at him." (Bader 17)

This passage adds depth to Jawad's character by revealing his desire for recognition and importance, while also providing a moment of levity in the narrative through the humorous description of his appearance. It exemplifies Ali Bader's skillful use of parody to create memorable characters and inject humor into the story.

The writer sarcastically describes the lawyer Butrus, emphasizing his physical appearance and mannerisms in a humorous and critical manner. Butrus is depicted as a thin and tiny man, whose diminutive size means only his head is visible behind his desk. This exaggerated portrayal adds comedic effect to the scene:

"Butrus sat behind his desk, and due to his small stature, only his head was visible. He jumped up to greet us, a thin, tiny man in a worn-out suit. he greeted us with a speech defect, mispronouncing his rs and mixing up words... He had a pencil behind his ear like a carpenter." (Bader 20)

This passage exemplifies the author's use of parody to create memorable and exaggerated character descriptions, infusing the narrative with satire and humor. Through sarcastic commentary, the author provides a critical perspective on Butrus's character while entertaining the reader. Additionally, Butrus's worn-out suit and speech defect contribute to his caricatured portrayal, and the description of his sad eyes and stony face adds to the absurdity, hinting at melancholy or resignation. The image of Butrus with a pencil behind his ear like a carpenter adds a final touch of humor, emphasizing his unconventional appearance and perhaps a lack of professionalism.

In the second chapter of the novel *"Writing Journey,"* Ali Bader employs parody to satirize the philosopher's social interactions and relationship dynamics, particularly in cafes and bars that he frequents. The philosopher, portrayed as a handsome and affluent young man, enjoys admiration and respect in these establishments, surrounded by friends and acquaintances who listen to his philosophical musings.

Ali Bader employs parody to satirize the philosopher's social circle, and their interactions, and to critique Western culture and existentialist philosophy. The scene described is a conversation between Ismail Hadoub and Abd al-Rahman, where Ismail recounts a purported encounter with Jean-Paul Sartre and other philosophers, including Simone de Beauvoir and Gabriel Marcel:

"Once I was visiting my friend Sartre, and Simone was present—I mean Simone de Beauvoir, of course. Naturally, there were other philosophers such as Merleau Ponty and Gabriel Marcel there as well... and Gabriel Petrovitch ... He's a Russian existentialist. He uses the pen name Midanoviski" (Bader 73).

This passage demonstrates Bader's skillful use of parody to both entertain and critique, offering a humorous yet insightful commentary on the world of intellectualism and the contradictions inherent in existentialist philosophy.

Ali Bader uses parody to humorously depict Abd al-Rahman's obsession with imitating the famous French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre. Abd al-Rahman's desire to emulate Sartre extends beyond mere intellectual admiration and encompasses every aspect of his appearance and demeanor.

Another prominent example of parody occurs when the narrator sums up the protagonist's personality, *"the philosopher of Al-Sadrya,"* Abd al-Rahman. He is obsessed with imitating the famous French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre in every aspect. Abd al-Rahman strives to become a second Sartre in his society by mimicking Sartre's clothing, speech, and appearance, including Sartre's hairstyle and glasses. However, Abd al-Rahman is deeply disappointed when he realizes that he has two eyes while his idol has one. The narrator writes:

"Abd al-Rahman got dressed... He compared his reflection to Sartre's photograph hanging on the wall and was overwhelmed with sadness. What if I were one-eyed? The two of us would have looked alike! Abd al-Rahman had shaved his moustache and styled his hair like Sartre's. His handsome oval face reflected all of Sartre's features... all resulting in a similarity that fell short of being complete as long as he had both eyes. What would happen if he became one-eyed and turned into another Sartre? Abd al-Rahman felt at this moment the cruelty of existence; he thought that life was not fair." (Bader 29)

The parody begins with Abd al-Rahman meticulously dressing himself in front of a mirror, carefully adjusting his tie and square eyeglasses with black plastic frames to resemble Sartre's iconic look. He even compares his reflection to a photograph of Sartre hanging on the wall, highlighting his disappointment that he has two eyes while his idol had only one. This exaggerated focus on physical resemblance underscores Abd al-Rahman's absurd dedication to imitating Sartre. Also, Abd al-Rahman goes to extreme lengths to style his hair like Sartre's and shave his moustache, all in an effort to mirror Sartre's features as closely as possible. However, despite his efforts, Abd al-Rahman's resemblance falls short of perfection due to his two eyes, leading him to lament the perceived unfairness of life.

The parody reaches its height when Abd al-Rahman imagines himself as a one-eyed individual like Jaseb, the illiterate vegetable seller of al-Sadriah souk. Through this comparison, Bader satirizes Abd al-Rahman's exaggerated self-importance and delusions of grandeur, contrasting his superficial imitation of Sartre with the humble simplicity of Jaseb. This passage effectively employs parody to critique Abd al-Rahman's absurd

obsession with imitating Sartre, highlighting the folly of his actions and the ironic humor of his situation.

Continuing with this parody, Ali Bader further underscores the absurdity of Abd al-Rahman's fixation on imitating Sartre by juxtaposing it with his interactions with Jaseb, the one-eyed vegetable seller.

The narrator: *"if it were not for that one eye of yours arguing in your favor, I would have smashed your head with my shoe"* (Bader 31). The passage exposes Abd al-Rahman's admiration for Sartre and his efforts to imitate him, contrasting sharply with his disrespectful treatment of Jaseb, who possesses the very characteristic Abd al-Rahman desires. Each encounter with Jaseb sees Abd al-Rahman insulting and reprimanding him, demonstrating a clear lack of respect for Jaseb's unique trait.

Jaseb's colorful and exaggerated curse not only serves as a comedic retort but also highlights the disdain and frustration felt by those who reject the philosophical pretensions of individuals like Abd al-Rahman:

"Damn your father and your father's father and Suhail Idris's father too!" Jaseb had no idea who Suhail Idris was, but realized that the man was responsible for the state of madness and loss that overcame people at that time." (Bader 31)

By cursing Abd al-Rahman's father and ancestors, as well as mentioning Suhail Idris, whom he doesn't even know, Jaseb symbolically condemns the entire lineage and influence of those who embraced existentialism during that era. The inclusion of Suhail Idris, a seemingly random figure, suggests that Jaseb attributes societal chaos and madness to the collective influence of those who subscribed to existentialist ideologies. This response adds another layer of satire to the narrative, as it underscores the absurdity of Abd al-Rahman's aspirations to emulate Western philosophers while disregarding the lived experiences and perspectives of ordinary individuals like Jaseb.

If one looks to this parodically quote deeply we will find that it refers to the Iraqi society, not only to this character or that period of time who lived in. In fact, the love of imitation for the Western culture is a prominent characteristic in Iraqi society. Because this kind is likeable for Iraqis, and you hardly see a scene without using a parody in the diary of an Iraqi citizen.

Actually, reading this quote, will come to our minds more ideas that the novelist faces by his irony to the hero Abd al-Rahman, or to the atheist French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre. One can say that the Iraqi people admire the famous characters and their tendency to look like them. And this is the message. For example, some people are obsessed with doing anything let them be, like famous actors or football players...etc.

Let us say it is human nature that we follow and try to imitate ourselves almost the time. In his book *Mahzalet Al-al-Aql Al-Bashary*, the Iraqi writer Ali Al-Wardi mentioned a saying by the English historian Arnold J. Toynbee *"It is the love of imitation that has made humans live a primitive life over a period of nearly three hundred thousand years"* (Al-Wardi 22). Then, Al-Wardi comments: *"If you want to know the culture of a society, look at those who have attained a high position in I"* (Al-Wardi 22).

The novel continues in this way, mockery, ridicule and parody until it ends in a cynical way even after the writer of the biography discovers that he was deceived and that he had abused and endangered the life of the merchant, Sadeq Zadeh, who had pledged to pay the costs of writing the biography. By revealing the consequences of deception and exploitation, the novel encourages reflection on the importance of authenticity and self-awareness in navigating cultural influences and shaping individual identity.

6. Recommendations

Essentially, one can further examine the portrayal of Iraqi society in *Papa Sartre*, which mirrors a diverse society that has old-style societal roles and stereotypes that have fixed beliefs concerning the morality of characters.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, one can come to the conclusion that the literary device "parody" is abundantly present in Ali Bader's novel "*Papa Sartre*". Ali Bader mocks and satirizes the generation of the 1960s in Iraq, ridiculing their behaviors, appearances, ideas, relationships, and the places they frequented. Through this parody, Ali Bader critiques the educated class of that era and those around them, who claimed to be well-read and more engaged in life than others. Two valuable results emerge from this analysis. Firstly, there is a need to examine Arabic literary works to highlight the influence of modern and postmodern elements, as there is a lack of studies and research on these works in English. Secondly, this research underscores the importance for any generation to be mindful of their thoughts and behaviors, to be aware of their reality, and to be responsible; not to be swayed by foreign ideas and philosophies. Otherwise, they risk being criticized by writers and literary works, as these works often become lasting records that continuously reflect and critique their subjects, especially in significant works like this one. Finally, it is crucial to encourage researchers to delve into contemporary Arab literature and compare it with similar works in Western literature. Such comparative studies can help readers, critics, and students understand the similarities and differences between these literatures and cultures.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors assert there are no conflicts of interest.

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