

## **Building the Place in the Novel " Al-Muhsina Village Days " by The Iraqi Poet and Novelist (Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri)**

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## Abstract

This topic came to adopt the study of an important element of the story of the Iraqi novelist Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri, which is the element of (place), as the novel cannot be established without it, and the narrative elements in a narrative text are not complete without the presence of place, as it comes together with the rest of the other narrative elements (character, time, event, and other elements). Perhaps the experience of the novelist Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri in his novel "Al-Muhsina Village Days" which represents the essence of the experience of a man who lived loving his village and the rural atmosphere in Iraq and its ancient places filled with warmth, tenderness, and pure nature, so his interest in place was exceptional, sometimes he makes the place familiar and makes it an imaginary place and other times he makes it realistic. Accordingly, the places differed and diversified with him, making the place rich with connotations and artistic characteristics. This research relied on the descriptive analytical approach and used several sources and references, the most important of which was Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri's novel (Al-Muhsina Village Days). As for the studies, the most important of them were: The Structure of the Novel Form by Hassan Bahrawi, The Structure of the Narrative Text from the Perspective of Literary Criticism by Hamid Lahmidani, The Aesthetics of Space by Gaston Bachelard, translated by Ghaleb Halsal, The Novelistic Space in the Literature of Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, Dr. Ibrahim Jandari.

**Keywords:** Modern literature; Iraqi poet; Novel; Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri.

بناء المكان في رواية "أيام قرية المحسنة" للشاعر والروائي العراقي (عيسى

حسن الياسري)

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## المستخلص

تناولت هذه الدراسة عنصراً مهماً من عناصر القصة عند الروائي العراقي عيسى حسن الياسري، وهو عنصر (المكان)، إذ لا يمكن بناء رواية بدونه، ولا تكتمل عناصر السرد في نص سردي ما دون وجوده، فهو يتضافر مع العناصر السردية الأخرى (الشخصيات، والزمان، والأحداث... إلخ). ولعل تجربة الروائي عيسى حسن الياسري في روايته "أيام قرية المحسنة" التي تمثل خلاصة تجربة رجل عاش عاشقاً لقريته والأجواء الريفية في العراق وأماكنها العتيقة المليئة بالدفء والحنان والطبيعة الصافية. لذلك، كانت عنايته بالمكان استثنائية، فهو تارةً يجعل المكان مألوفاً، وتارةً أخرى يجعله متخيلاً، وثالثةً يجعله واقعياً. لذلك، تنوّعت عنده الأماكن، مما جعل المكان زاخراً بدلالات وسمات فنية. اعتمد البحث على المنهج الوصفي التحليلي واحتوى عدة مصادر ومراجع، على رأسها رواية "أيام قرية المحسنة" للروائي عيسى حسن الياسري، وعلى كثير من الدراسات، أهمها بنية الشكل الروائي لحسن بحرأوي وبنية النص السردي من منظور النقد الأدبي لحמיד لحميداني وجماليات المكان لغاستون باشلار ترجمة غالب هلسا والفضاء الروائي في أدب جبرا إبراهيم جبرا لإبراهيم جنداري.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الأدب الحديث، شاعر عراقي، الرواية، عيسى سن الياسري.

## Introduction

### Structure

The term structure in the narrative space is considered to be steps in the stages of construction, and each of these stages represents a step to complete writing the narrative text, in a way that makes the text reach the degree of completeness and perfection or close to it, and this requires the storyteller to be skilled in placing the basic building blocks in their appropriate place so that the parts of the narrative work fit together. In linguistic references, we find that the word structure means the form on which the word is built, so we find Ibn Manzur saying: (The structure is as if it is the form on which it is built) (Al-Misri, 1999). In the Taj Al-Arus dictionary, it means "what I built, as if the structure is the form on which it is built" (Al-Zubaidi, 1974). The linguists agree in Arabic dictionaries that the meaning of place indicates (the location or the place of settlement). So, the structure means the form or the general, integrated form on which the word is built. As for the terminology, we mean by it that the structure of the artistic text is the components of that text, and that each one of these components is connected to the other, and that the structure stems from the text itself, and is not governed by any external standards (Al-Marashdeh, 2006). This comes following the vision of the creator in terms of the appropriate technique that he sees, and that the structure is the system established between the parts of the artwork, and it is also the guidelines that unify similar relationships between the parts of a single artwork.

### Place

As for the word, place carries the meanings of space, size, volume, area, and emptiness (Davies, 1996). Many definitions of place have been mentioned in many language dictionaries, but these definitions are similar. Among these dictionaries is Al-Sahah Dictionary by Al-Jawhari, in which he discussed the word place and defined it, saying: (Place: position... and place and status: location) (Haroun, 2004). As for the place in the terminology, it has been addressed by many researchers and scholars; because of the importance and status of the place, as the place represents the land, the homeland, the home, the shelter, and the scene of the events that we live,

and what concerns us here is what the specialists in the science of literature have addressed, as the place in the literary artistic concept is an imaginary or assumed image and sometimes real. It is a language, a symbol, and a conscious choice that reflects creators' skill in poetry and narrative art, but it remains removed from the world of reality through simulation. In the novel, place is a basic component of its five components: time, place, characters, events, and narrator. These components are interconnected and interact; therefore, the place is no longer merely a decoration or background for the novel, but rather an active, changing presence containing various contradictions.

(Place, like any element of artistic construction, is renewed through the conscious practice of the artist. It is not a visible external building, a space with a defined area, or a composition of rooms, fences, and windows. Rather, it is an entity of changing action containing a history, and its dimensions are imbued with the histories of light and darkness. Such a place needs a physical neighborhood through which it can be clarified and grow. Otherwise, all houses would become places suitable for action, and all streets would become spaces for the feet of demonstrators. Place in art is a choice, and choice is language, meaning, idea, and intention) (Nasir, 1986).

An event on a ship at sea is not the same as one in a desert, and it is also different from a third event in a bustling city full of movement and life. This means that the narrative event is presented only through its temporal and spatial data, and without these data, the narrative cannot deliver its narrative message. For this reason, the writer must pay great attention to determining the place to give the narrative event a degree of logic and reasonableness. Likewise, the writer must be concerned with depicting the word space in which the characters move, because the reader may deduce from this depiction many connotations that explain or deepen matters related to the event, the characters, or both. The place is not formed in the novel and does not take its novelistic form except through the events associated with it. There is no pre-determined place, but rather places are formed through the events carried out by the heroes. On this basis, the construction of the novelistic space appears linked to the plan of narrative events, and thus, it is the path that it follows towards the narration. This obligatory connection

between the novelistic space and the event will give the novel coherence and harmony. The place is one of the basic factors on which the event is based, and there will be no novel unless there is some place where one person meets another, and in which some event occurs. There will be no novel unless there is some place where one person meets another and some event occurs. The novelistic plot and the novelistic subject need it, as the place is inseparable from its things, for it fills it and gives it that richness that distinguishes one place from another (Al-Bashir, 2021). When a literary work lacks spatiality, it loses its specificity and thus its authenticity (Bachla, 1987). The place is influenced outside the novel text, as it plays the role of a detonator of the creative energies; it expresses the author's intentions. The novel's place is a linguistic construction, constructed by the novelist's imagination, and its verbal character makes it include all the feelings and perceptions that language can express; this is because the place in the novel is not the natural or objective place, but rather it is a place that the author creates in the novel text through words and makes of it something imaginary. The place in the novel text is an imaginary place and a linguistic construction "established by words in compliance with the purposes of imagination and its need, (so the place) is the product of a group of different and fabricated linguistic styles in the text. Hence, some scholars believe that "the genius of literature, truly, is its space" (Bachla, 1987). We find that the term structure revolves around the space of the text's components, and the construction of place revolves around the mechanisms of place, its foundations, and its relationships with other narrative elements such as time and event, in addition to the types according to which it came.

### **Biography and Achievements:**

An Iraqi short story writer and poet, one of the poets of the sixty's generation, born in 1942 in a peasant village in southern Iraq on the banks of the Abu Bashout River near the city of Al-Kumait in Maysan Governorate, see Fig. 1.





Fig (1) Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri at different ages.

He completed his primary education at the village and Al-Kumait city schools. He completed his intermediate education and the Teachers' College in Amara in 1963. He worked in education, radio, and literary journalism between 1963 and 1990. He left in 1998 and stayed for two years in Jordan. On April 2, 2001, he arrived in Canada and resided in Quebec City and then in Montreal until now. He was given several titles, as the critic Abdul Hadi Saadoun called him the poet of deep simplicity, and the cultural and linguistic roots extending to the depths of the Mesopotamian land (Mesopotamia of Iraq). A poet who is attached to the concerns of his people, and the fraternal relationship between humans and nature, without neglecting the renewal movements in contemporary literature, which have an impact and participation to benefit from in building his aesthetic poetic edifices. Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri, in his novel, poetry, and everything he wrote, gives us the most beautiful anthem (for the Iraqi geese) ever, so he was nicknamed the village poet (Al-Yasiri, 2021). He published six poetry books between 1973 and 1996 by the House of Cultural Affairs in Baghdad, one poetry collection by Sanabel House in Cairo in 2008, and a poetry collection by Fadaat House in Jordan in 2011. His poetry works were also published in 2017 by the Arab Foundation for Studies and Publishing in Beirut, and one novel entitled "Al-Muhsina Village Days" by Fadaat House in Jordan in 2011, see fig. 2. The poetry works of Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri were published at Faris House for Publishing and Distribution, Jordan, Amman, 1st ed., 2021 (Al-Yasiri, 2021).





Fig (2) Novel entitled "Al-Muhsina Village Days".

## Methodology and Discussion

### Place and its connection to the novel elements

The place represents an important element of the narrative text construction, as it determines the framework of events and characters (Jandari, 2012). This element must have a distinct and effective presence within the narrative text. Thus, it will be an element that combines with other elements, forming a harmony between it and other narrative elements, so that the narrative text comes out complete and distinct from different texts. It will be effective in it, in a way that helps in its development, as the place is qualified (to reveal the unconscious of the character and its psychological and social lives, because there is no meaning or significance for the place apart from the person who organizes it and carries out the processes of cutting and detailing in its structure according to specific cultural mechanisms) (Hussein, 2000). In addition, the place seeks to develop the rest of the other narrative elements. For a place to have a major effect in the narrative text, it must have semantic

and symbolic dimensions far from reality and its manifestations in a way that gives the recipient a kind of interaction with the elements of the narrative text. Perhaps the narrative place does not differ much from the real lived place in terms of its furnishings and composition, and the creator must depict this place through many mechanisms, assisted in that by the element of description, which contributes greatly to the process of drawing the features and boundaries of the place (and transferring - through language - the place from its abstract nature to the level of the image) (Haniya, 2013).

### **Effectiveness of place (relationship between place and time)**

The successful storyteller and novelist is the one who can build the element of place and create strong relationships between it and other narrative elements such as time, event, character, and other elements. Based on that, creators can take a little time to build their narrative text, which is what creators do. Thus, we must talk about this issue. The creator can (deal with his place in a skillful manner, taking it as a material framework through which he can conjure up other narrative problems) (Atef Abu Seif, 2006). The creator cannot establish the element of place in isolation from the structural elements of the narrative text, as it is not formed through its geographical dimensions or architecture, but rather appears through the integration of place with the elements of narration within the creative work in general. It is not mentioned for the sake of description only, but rather it carries the viewpoint of the creative narrator and his future and present vision embodied in the characters that the creator establishes in a natural and inartificial way (Shaheen, 2001). Accordingly, the place has intimate relationships and connections that unite it with other narrative elements, and in what follows, we will talk about that according to a logical sequence: Time is an important and effective element in constructing the narrative text. Indeed, it is the framework upon which all the aspects of construction are built, and it cannot be dispensed with. Critics in the modern era have paid attention to time and considered it a basic part and an important axis of constructing the narrative text (without which there is no story, so if temporality were to be absent, the story would be lacking) (Hafez, n.d.). This relationship, which takes on a metaphorical character, is originally a real and interconnected relationship.

(The precise control of time and place includes a form of freezing it and preventing it from the usual spontaneous fluidity and its supposed effectiveness, because controlling a fixed element is easier than controlling a moving element, as we find that a large number of novelists have resorted to such control, especially controlling place, and it meant for them a kind of adherence to narrow fixed limits that often constitute an additional factor that helps the novelist to control the movement of the novelistic elements that must move, such as characters and time) (Al-Tamimi, 2004).

(The relationship between space and time is clear, and they are intertwined, but each of them can indicate the other and be defined through the fact that they are a spatial presence in the novel, and they constitute a key to identifying time and place in the novel, on the course of the historical and existential line by defining them) (Saleh, 1997). When speaking about the relationship between time and place within the limits of the narrative work, we find that (the bonds of the relationship between the spatial and temporal structure are embodied within all the narrative details) (Hassanein, 2015).

Accordingly, the place in Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri's novel has close relationships and connections. In a careful reading of his novel (Al-Muhsina Village Days), several texts that document this are found, and among these texts is his saying:

عصر نهار ربيعي، السفينة التي تحمل الفسائل ترسو قريباً من الأرض المعدة لغرسها كانت رحلة شاقة وطويلة استمرت عدة أيام قطعت خلالها مسافات كبيرة وهي تسير بين لجج الأهوار، العواصف الآذرية كادت تغرقها أكثر من مرة، لكنها وصلت بسلام

A spring afternoon, the ship carrying the seedlings anchored near the land, prepared for planting. It was a long and arduous journey that lasted several days, during which it covered great distances while sailing between the waves of the marshes. The March storms almost sank it more than once, but it arrived safely (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

The awareness of the event reveals a close reminiscent space, and although the narrator did not explicitly specify the time and date directly, despite specifying the time as (a spring afternoon), and the place (the land prepared for planting), neither of them reveal a clearly defined framework, given that the narrative depends in forming its content on the general life of

the village and the lives of the individual characters. Here, it focuses on the characters' actions towards agriculture, which takes place in it - that is, agriculture - in the spring, and also sitting around the stoves takes place at night, as in the novelist's saying:

هبط الليل وفي المضيف، وحول مواقد النار في الأكواخ، بدأت تدور أحاديث الفلاحين وأسرهم، وأحاديث من نمط خاص، أحاديث شبيهة بالأحلام، مسرحها قطع أرض صغيرة مغروسة بالنخيل، والنخيل تكبر يوما بعد يوم، بل في كل ساعة، وفجأة تتدلى أغداق رطبها الذهبية ... دخلت معهم حتى في أغطية النوم، لذا لم ينم أحد في تلك الليلة، بل ظلوا ينتظرون طلوع الفجر ينتظارهم لصياح العيد، وهكذا قبل طلة طلوع الشمس بدأ العمل..

Night fell, and in the guest house, and around the fires in the huts, the conversations of the peasants and their families began, conversations of a special type, conversations similar to dreams, their stage being small plots of land planted with palm trees, and the palm trees growing day after day, even every hour, and suddenly their golden dates hung down... They even entered with them in the sleeping covers, so no one slept that night, but they remained waiting for the dawn to rise, waiting for the Eid cry, and so on. Before sunrise, work began... (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

In the above text, we notice the relationship between place and time based on overlap and integration (place is only perceived at a specific time) (Sedira, 2004). In another narrative text by the novelist Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri, we notice a deep connection, cohesion, and association between place and time, in his saying:

أشهر الشتاء تتقدم محملة بالخصب فقد اخضرت الحقول واكتسبت المراعي بالعشب - الحفيد يستمتع بأيام هادئة، يمتلئ بالغبطة وهو يرى إلى فلاحه قريته يحملون كتبهم ودفاترهم إلى جانب مساحيهم ومناجلهم، وهو يتجول بين الحقول، كانت تصله اصواتهم وهم يقرأون دروسهم فتعود به الذاكرة إلى أيام- الجد -، حيث يطلب من الجميع رجالا ونساء وأطفالا أن يتعلموا القراءة والكتابة، وكان الفلاحون والرعاة آنذاك يتجمعون في حلقات تكبر أو تصغر، كل حلقة يتوسطها أحد أصحاب - الحفيد - ..... كان الحفيد - يصغي إلى نبض تلك الايام، ويتحسس نعومتها، يتذوق شهد صوتها الذي يأتيه مخترقا جدار السنوات، ومتحدا بأصوات فلاحه قريته الذين يتعلمون بطريقة الحياة الجديدة

The winter months advance, laden with fertility, as the fields turn green and the pastures gain grass. The grandson enjoys quiet days, filled with joy as he sees the peasants of his village carrying their books and notebooks, along with their spades and sickles. As he wanders among the fields, he hears their

voices as they read their lessons, and his memory takes him back to the days of his grandfather, when he asks everyone, men, women, and children, to learn to read and write. At that time, the peasants and shepherds would gather in circles, larger or smaller, and the middle of each circle was one of the grandson's companions. The grandson would listen to the pulse of those days, feel their softness, taste the honey of their voices that come to him penetrating the wall of years, and unite with the voices of the peasants of his village who are learning the new way of life (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

In the text, the element of time is highlighted through words that denote it, which refer to vast ages in antiquity (days, years), and the aspect of place is highlighted through the presence of words that denote it (village, fields). The cohesion between the place elements and time is seen clearly through a close and precise look at the features included in this text. The presence of the characters of the story with these features and these names: farmers, grandson, men, women, children, clearly confirms to us the prominence of the element of narrative time and its connection with place in the way that appears to us and with conclusive evidence of the impossibility of separating them. Perhaps the interest in place here is based on the principle: place is the most comprehensive and inclusive tool for the meanings of the text and its artistry (Naseer, 2003). Among the texts in which we notice the embodiment of time in place, his saying:

أضاءت "رضية" الفانوس النفطي. وقفت لتعلقه في وسط الكوخ. بدأت تجمع حاجاتها، لقد وصل خالها "محمد حسن" عصرا وستسافر معه إلى القرية "السنية" لتضع طفلها الأول عندهم. أحزنها أن تترك زوجها وهو على هذه الحال. لو كان الأمر بيدها لظلت إلى جانبه، لكن تقاليد القرية تقضي هكذا أن تلد – الكنة – مولودها البكر عند أهلها. جلست قريبا من كومة الملابس. انحنيت عليها. بكت بصمت. تذكرت أول عامين سعيدين عاشتهما الناس هنا.

"Radhiya" lit up the oil lantern. She stood up to hang it in the middle of the hut. She began to gather her things. Her uncle, "Muhammad Hassan" had arrived in the afternoon, and she would travel with him to the "Sunni" village to give birth to her first child with them. It saddened her to leave her husband in this state. She would have stayed by his side if it were up to her, but the village's traditions dictate that the daughter-in-law give birth to her first child with her family. She sat close to the pile of clothes. She bent over

them. She cried silently. She remembered the first two happy years the people had lived here (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

The hut, as we know, is the kingdom of man in which he practices his life, his existence, and feels himself in it, in villages, countryside, and city (within the spatial structure of the house, the structure of feelings and the structure of actions are embodied) (Al-Nassir, n.d.). Accordingly, the place (the hut) in Issa Hassan's novel has close relationships and connections, through its connection to time, as the narrative event in this story is based on Radhiya's going to her family's house to give birth to her child, and this is the custom of the villagers, which is revealed by the narrative introduction that is based on this event, paving the way for it by specifying a time that can be deduced through clues (lit, oil lantern) that indicate the time of night when it is dark. The presence of the place is highlighted through the words that suggest it (hut, village). Here he describes to us the sadness and disappointment that the character (Radhiya) felt, as the narrator was able to embody these dimensions thanks to the place with its many connotations and the fatigue that afflicts the character due to leaving the home in this state. We must say here that the conflict between the characters within the framework of the coherent narrative text does not occur in a vacuum, but rather in multiple and specific times and places (Al-Aila, 2003). As the text suggests, this journey was preceded by difficult circumstances and arduous suffering due to the drought that the village of Al-Muhsana and its people were suffering from at that time. Accordingly, we note the strong relationship between the element of place on the one hand and the element of time on the other.

### **Place effectiveness (the relationship between place and event)**

Some dictionaries of the ancient language define the event as (little or much news, and its plural is hadiths, contrary to the norm) (Al-Razi, 1990). As for the intermediate dictionary, the event is (much, well-articulated, and it is said that so-and-so told so-and-so, and women told, and kings told, and the hadith is everything that is spoken about, speech and news, and it is said that the hadith has concerns, by which others are reminded) (Ibrahim Mustafa, Ahmed Hassan Al-Zayat, Hamed Abdel Qader, 1961). Technically speaking, everything leads to a change in something, the creation of a



movement, or the production of something (*Dictionary of Novel Criticism Terms (Arabic, English, French)*, 2002). The event in the novel can be defined as ((he character's action and movement within the story) (Muslim, 1998). This movement requires the presence of a place, and without it, the event cannot be achieved. Therefore, their presence and their combination are a must, for (where there are no events, there are no places) (Bahrawi, 1990). The opposite is true, so every event that the narrative work deals with is contained in the place as a framework, whether these events have ties to reality or not, and they must take place in a spatial space, whether wide or narrow (Hassanein, 2015). (Objectivity builds the elements of drama, so the intense and exaggerated description in a place indicates his control over an event or his control over the scene of events and leading them to their end, so the adventures of the heroine and her spatial movements gain various events, and at the same time gain multiple places, all of which are prepared to suit the event) (Hassanein, 2015).

عند لك بشارة ثمنها كوم كبير من التبن قال - جعفر وهو يسحب الحفيد من يده إلى داخل البيت - لقد فرجها الله - تكلم - أبو خليل (هزه الحفيد بقوة وتابع) أملا بيتك وبيوت جيرانك بالتبن، أعطي - كورتك - وحميرك بالتبن، فقط قل لي ماهي البشارة؟ - لا ليس الآن أولاً تقطر ثم أخبرك - أبو خليل - أنا فطرت في البيت - تصنع لهما الشاي. - لن أشرب الشاي - قال له - الحفيد سأذهب وسأعرف الخبر من الآخرين وعندها لن أعطيك عود - تبن - واحد

- إنتظر إنتظر ساقول لك البشارة لقد بدأ نهر - دجلة - يفيض بالماء

You have good news, the price of which is a large pile of straw, he said - Jaafar, pulling the grandson by the hand into the house - God has made it easy - Abu Khalil spoke (the grandson shook him forcefully and continued) Fill your home and the houses of your neighbors with straw, cover your cloak and your donkeys with straw, tell me what the good news is? - No, not now. First, break your fast, then I will tell you - Abu Khalil - I broke my fast at home. - Make tea for them. - I will not drink tea - the grandson said to him. I will go and find out the news from the others, and then I will not give you a single stick of straw. - Wait, wait, I will tell you the good news. The Tigris River has begun to overflow with water (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

The truth, including actions in a space of time and place, differs along with a fruitful dialogue that will create for us an artistic text, and this is what we



find in the text. In another text, we find that the event is mixed with many elements in the narrator, the most important of which are space, place, and time. This is what we find in the story (Athwini):

سأله الجد، يده تربت على كتفه بحنو أبوي لم يألفه من قبل، انتفض كمن لدغ، أحتج كل ما فيه من غضب أخرس، هذه طريقة لمواساة الأطفال والضعفاء والمنكسرين، كيف لا يعرفون اسمه؟ ألم يحذرهم أحد وهم يستعدون لقطع هذا الطريق من إمكانية اللقاء به؟ من أية بقعة من بقاع الأرض جاءت هذه المخلوقات؟ ليس من أحد ينتمي للجنس الأدمي في هذه الأرض لم يسمع باسمه، كانت أمه تقطع المسافات الطويلة، ومتى تعرض لها أحدهم تنتخي باسمه قائلة: أنا أم اثويني

عند ذاك يولي من يعترض طريقها هاربا وهو يلعن هذا الاسم

= ما اسمك يا بني؟ سأله - الجد - ثانية -.. لم يصمت طويلا هذه المرة بل ذكر له اسمه.

= انهض يا اثويني، انهض يا بني، هذه التلال ملعونة - خاطبه الجد وتابع - الأرض التي لا يقطنها البشر لا يذكر فيها اسم الله وهكذا تصيح وكرا للشياطين، هيا تعال معي، ودعني أنقذ روحك الضالة، أريد أن آخذك معي إلى الله، لتأكل من خبزه، وتتنفس هواءه النظيف.

The grandfather asked him, his hand patting his shoulder with a fatherly tenderness he had never experienced before. He flinched as if he had been bitten, protesting all his mute anger. This was a way to console children, the weak, and the broken. How could they not know his name? Didn't anyone warn them of the possibility of meeting him as they prepared to travel this road? From which spot-on earth did these creatures come? There is no human being on this earth who has not heard his name. His mother used to travel long distances, and whenever someone encountered her, she would shout out his name, saying: I am the mother of Athwini. Then anyone who crossed her path would run away, cursing this name. What is your name, my son? - the grandfather asked him again -. This time, he did not remain silent for long but mentioned his name to him. Rise, Athwini, rise, my son. These hills are cursed - the grandfather addressed him and continued - the land not inhabited by humans, where the name of God is not mentioned, and thus it becomes a den of devils. Come with me, and let me save your lost soul. I want to take you, come with me to God, to eat His bread and breathe His clean air (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

Here, the place expanded to include the organized rhythm of the events in these places and the characters' viewpoints. The narrator relied heavily on the event in his story and employed the place to contain it. In another text, we notice the effectiveness of the place with the elements of the story, such as his saying:

دب الخوف بين الرجال وهم يصغون إلى - ابرسيم - الذي أخبرهم انه ذهب إلى بستان - حمور - ليأخذ بطيخة، وحين قطعها تحولت إلى - حية - ظلت تركض خلفه حتى وصل إلى هنا، نهض - حمور - واقترب من - ابرسيم - قائلاً: الآن عرفت كل آخر نهار أحسب البطيخ وفي اليوم التالي أجده ناقصاً - ابرسيم أنت حرامي، ولولا إنك في حماية - الحفيد - لضربتك بهذه العصا، - ابرسيم - أنا علمتك أن السرقة حرام - خاطبه الحفيد - وهي لا تحل الا للجائع الذي يسأل الآخرين طعاماً ولا يعطونه

Fear spread among the men as they listened to Ibrseem, who told them that he went to Hamour's orchard to take a watermelon, and when he cut it, it turned into a snake that kept running after him until he arrived here. Hamour approached Ibrseem, saying: Now I know that I count the watermelons every other day, and I find them incomplete the next day. Ibrseem, you are a thief, and if you were not under the protection of the grandson, I would have hit you with this stick. Ibrseem, I taught you that stealing is forbidden, the grandson addressed him, and it is only permissible for the hungry who asks others for food, and they do not give it to him (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

The novelist uses his imagination to construct the fictional place, and this is what we see clearly in the story of Ibrseem, as the events of the story took place in a place, which is the orchard, and it is the place from which Ibrseem stole the watermelon, and sunset is nothing but the time when Hamour counts the watermelons of the orchard. The place expanded to include the story's elements, from events to characters to time. In another text, we notice the effectiveness of the place with the event, as he says:

بعد لحظات ظهر حصان أدهم يبسط ظله على الطريق، يعتلي ظهره شرطي بثيابه الكاكية، وإزراره اللماعة، منذ سنوات طوال لم يظهر شرطي فوق هذه الارض، العيون ترتد عن الطريق الذي يفتشره شبح الشرطي وتلتقي ببعض من خلال نظرات صامته مستفهمه، ولا بد أن أمراً جليلاً قد حدث والا ما معنى أن يحضر شرطي إلى القرية المحسنة؟ أدرك - الحفيد - عمق قلقهم خاطبهم قائلاً: لا تقلقوا ربما عثروا بعد كل هذه السنوات على المجرم الذي اقتلع فسائل النخيل، انصرفوا الآن الى بيوتكم وفي المساء ستعرفون كل شيء.

After a few moments, a dark horse appeared, spreading its shadow on the road, with a policeman riding on its back, wearing khaki clothes and shiny buttons. For many years, no police officer had appeared on this land. Eyes turned away from the road where the policeman's ghost lay, and met each other through silent, questioning glances. Something serious must have

happened; otherwise, what was the meaning of a policeman coming to the improved village? The grandson realized the depth of their anxiety and addressed them, saying, "Do not worry. Perhaps, after all these years, they have found the criminal who uprooted the palm tree seedlings. Now go to your homes, and in the evening, you will know everything (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

The event that the narrator presents in his novel is based on introducing a scene with integrated parts in a clearly defined darkness, which reaches the village's exposure in the novel's overall events, to injustice and various intimidation by the city government. The event revolves around several parties with multiple perspectives. However, the main driver (the narrative actor), the officer whose presence intimidates wherever he is, and this event reflects a clear image of what happens in most villages and cities, which reinforces the act of intimidation.

العيون ترتد عن الطريق الذي يفترشه شبح الشرطي وتلتقي ببعض من خلال نظرات صامته مستفهمه

The eyes turn away from the road where the policeman's ghost is lying and meet each other through silent, questioning looks.

This narration is clear in its features, and the narrator is a witness who places us in front of a complete picture of the act of the event, which is an event that belongs to a beloved space and another opposite, which is the officer and the implementer of the act of intimidation.

حاول -غالب - أن يتخفى عن عيني معلمه ي، لذا فقد طوى ذراعيه فوق الرحلة، ودس رأسه بينهما كما يفعل -مالك الحزين -، عندما تداهمه الرياح الشديدة، أخذ يدعو الله ان يجعل بينه وبين هذا المعلم الشرس سدا حتى لا يراه، ولكن ما خشيه سرعان ما وقع، فقد وقف ذلك المعلم قريبا منه وخاطبه غاضبا:

، وانت أبيها، الفلاح، مايك ...؟ انهض.. لماذا تجلس بهذه الطريقة ...؟  
انت لست في مرعى للغنم او حظيرة للأبقار، انت داخل صف دراسي، عدد اقسام الكلام نهض هي الصاعقة تتخطى الجميع وتحط مرتعبا، أكثر من شتاء حل في جسده، كل ادعيته لم تجد نفعا، فها على رأسه.

Ghalib tried to hide from his teacher's eyes, so he folded his arms over the journey, and buried his head between them as a heron does when a strong wind overtakes him. He began to pray to God to make a barrier between him

and this fierce teacher so that he would not see him, but what he feared soon happened, as that teacher stood close to him and addressed him angrily:

And you, farmer, Mike...? Get up... Why are you sitting like this?...

You are in a classroom, not a sheep pasture or a cow pen. He stood up, terrified, more than one winter had settled in his body, all his prayers were of no use, as the thunderbolt passed everyone and landed on his head (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

The narrator presents a clear spatial passage and easily explains the teacher's frightening way of dealing with the students in the city school, and the horrifying situation of the aforementioned character. There are tenses related to the poetics of the event/place, so to speak, which is (winter, stormed by strong winds), each of which carries connotations related to the event on the one hand and to the characters on the other. Accordingly, we notice clearly that great relationship between the element of place on the one hand and the elements of time and event on the other hand, and the reason lies in the fact that all narrative texts do not work alone, but rather come together, forming an integrated narrative fabric.

### **The Familiar Place and the Hostile Place**

#### **The Favorite Place: The Village:**

It is the place we love, our artificial earthly paradise, the space mixed with the soul, saturated with the value of the effect as a non-quantitative mental authority that flourishes in the phenomenology of the imagination and has an increasing importance in it in a way that it can be said that we do not only live the experience of the beloved place, but that the beloved place lives in us, or lives us, to be more precise, as it reassures the self and raises in it feelings of containment and protection. The poet mixes with it, reaching complete psychological union, and making the place close to it, equivalent to it, or a manifestation of the self's manifestations, or a mask of its masks (D. M. T. Al-Asadi, 2003). This is what we will see in the novel (Al-Muhsina Village Days), as the beloved place is often what is connected to the mother earth, as it is (a state of primitive placental connection to the womb of the mother earth) (D. M. T. Al-Asadi, 2003).

Such as the homeland, village or river, this type of place became popular in the novel of Issa Hassan Al-Yasiri, and this place is where the characters

feel familiar and safe, it is that place with which the person becomes familiar, and leaves an indelible mark on his soul, as if it were the place of early childhood or the place of adolescence and youth and any place in which he grew up and was raised, and it became one of his intellectual, emotional and sentimental components, as this place arouses a feeling of reassurance, security and memory (D. M. T. Al-Asadi, 2003).

There may be harmony and compatibility between the character and the place, or there may not be: (If a type of harmony occurs, the characters live in familiarity, and if that does not happen, the characters will hate the place, and a kind of contradiction arises, and from these two relationships two types of place are generated and a group of attractive places and repellent places are formed, but the commonly known term is the familiar place if the character is in harmony with it) (D. M. T. Al-Asadi, 2003).

Because people loved their places and became accustomed to them, because they are their selves and their being, despite the great transformations that they were exposed to, and the novel "Al-Muhsina Village Days" began from the threshold of the text that starts with the name of the novel, which suggests the novelist's feeling of longing and groaning for the beautiful days in that village, the village that was a place that is not just a geometric description that the novelist determines as a framework in which events take place. However, rather it is an entity that grows with the character and affects it (it is an abstract world that is formed and imagined through dreams, hopes, mental and emotional visions, and extends in the embrace of childhood and primitiveness) (Zayed, 2003). The village represented the familiar place and everything in the town, from the village huts, and the nature of the village, as he said:

الشمس تبدأ بالشروق، هواء الخريف الصباحي يسخن تدريجياً، البراري الفسيحة تنكشف امامها جسدا عاريا، تنتشر فوقه اعشاب براية صفراء، عن بعد وعلى جانبي الطريق يظهر منخفضان يابسان هما منخفض هور " أم الغاق " وهور " أم عطنه ". عند حافاتهما تظهر شتلات القصب والبردي اليابسة، حمل ضوء الشمس، وهذه الأرض البدائية التي تمتد إلى مالا نهاية بعضاً من الهدوء والبهجة ...

The sun begins to rise, the morning autumn air gradually warms, the wide prairies reveal before them a naked body, over which yellow flag grasses spread, in the distance and on both sides of the road, two dry depressions

appear, the depression of the "Umm Al-Ghaq" marsh and the "Umm Atna" marsh. At their edges, dry reed and papyrus seedlings emerge, the sunlight carries, and this primitive land that extends to infinity, some peace and joy... (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

The text belongs to a group of signs that confirm the presence of familiarity within the boundaries of nature, which belongs to a fertile world brimming with life, tenderness, love, and understanding, considering nature as the largest incubator of familiarity and love. The text includes an emotional description of the nature of the village, its pure atmosphere, and the beauty of its plants. The beauty was not limited to the nature of the town, but rather moved to the description of the village school, as he said:

مرة أخرى تفتح المدرسة أبوابها، يظهر ذلك المنظر المحبب إلى قلوب الناس والذي يتكرر كل صباح، عشرات الاطفال والفتيات يحملون الاكياس الصوفية الملونة، والتي تحتوي كتبهم ودفاترهم وأقلامهم، والمتاع الذي يتكون من أرغفة الخبز أو التمر الذي تضعه فيها امهاتهم، الجميع يسبغون ممثلين بالفرح ... والفتيات منهم بصورة خاصة يرفعون اصواتهم بالغناء مرددين اغنيات عيده

Once again, the school opens its doors, that scene that is dear to people's hearts and is repeated every morning appears, dozens of children and girls carrying colorful woolen bags, which contain their books, notebooks, pens, and the belongings that consist of loaves of bread or dates that their mothers put in them, everyone walks filled with joy... and the girls among them in particular raise their voices in singing, repeating Eid songs (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

The novelist describes the feelings of the village children as they head to school as if it were a holiday. This joy is mixed with simplicity (loaves of bread, dates) and filled with the warmth of farewell from their mothers. In another text, he describes the villagers' insistence on working in the village and their preference for tilling the land over city jobs, which they consider a form of slavery, and that cultivating the land is freedom, as he says:

يرى كل عمل لا يرتبط بالأرض عملاً باطلاً، كل عمل يقود إلى العبودية الا العمل في الارض فإنه يمثل الحرية، هذا هو مفهوم " الجد" للحرية لقد عرضت عليه السلطة على - الجد - بدنها بتشديد مدينة "الكميت" ان يختار من ارضها ما يشاء لتسجل باسمه، أرسلوا له أحد رجالهم من ذوي " الطرابيش " الحمر قال له.. إن الدولة ترغب أن تمنحه املاكاً في المدينة الجديدة تقديراً لمكانته في



المنطقة، وقد رد عليه " الجد " قائلا: هذه الارض هي ثروتي واملاكي ومتى صار لي سواها اهملت خدمتها، ان زراعة حقل صغير أحب الى قلبي من قيام ألف مدينة.

He sees every work not connected to the land as futile work; every work leads to slavery except work on the land, representing freedom. This is the concept of "the grandfather" of freedom. The authorities offered him "the grandfather" to start building the city of "Al-Kumait" to choose from its land whatever he wanted to register in his name. They sent him one of their men with the red "tarbooshes" who told him.. that the state wants to grant him property in the new city in appreciation of his position in the region, and "the grandfather" replied to him saying: This land is my wealth and my property, and when I have something else, I will neglect to serve it. Cultivating a small field is dearer to my heart than establishing a thousand cities (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

The novelist narrates the extent of the grandfather's and then the grandson's attachment to the love of the land. The text contains a deep dimension of the luxury sought in achieving a happy and secure life, a life with natural means of livelihood. The grandfather's words suggest the intimacy of the relationship between the place/land of the village and the character. The novelist's endeavor in the narrative space and within the limits of realism is a stage to make the town a piece of paradise, considering that the qualifications of the village are the same as the qualifications of paradise. The text contains a high degree of emotion towards the love of the place/village, which carries within it a love rooted in the veins of the villagers. Everything in the town was based on purity, innocence, and cleanliness of the soul, unlike in the city, which we will address in the next section.

### **Unpopular place: The city**

A desolate place is a place where a person is forced to live, and towards which he does not feel at home. (There are attractive places that help us to settle, and repellent places. A person not only needs a physical geographical space to live, but he longs for a patch in which he can strike roots and in which his identity is rooted) (Al-Shanqiti, 2018). It is a desolate place thrown outside the soul, a source of existential anxiety and obsessions of fear of the unknown (M. T. Al-Asadi, 2003)(طالب, 2013). These places are



either where a person resides by force, like exile, or where the danger of death lurks for one reason or another (Al-Ani, 1987). The hostile place is considered to be the place (that a person does not desire, like prisons and exiles, or which poses a danger to his life, like battlefields. In these places, one does not feel familiarity, reassurance, and comfort, but rather feels hostility and hatred towards them) (Al-Khafaji, 2012). (Hence, it can only be studied in the context of emotionally charged topics and nightmarish images) (Mohamed Bouazza, 2010). Therefore, the hostile place is not confined to certain limits. Thus, it is represented (in a person when he feels alienation and loneliness and is unable to get along with his family and fellow citizens, and they are not connected by a blood bond or a bond of belonging, and when he settles among them, he settles in a forced settlement imposed upon him and is treated with contempt there) (Al-Abidi, 2009).

Thus, the hostile place represents the stifling place, thrown outside the soul, which arouses in the human self-fear and anxiety to the point of suffocation, and the relationship between it and the person is a negative, hostile relationship. The activities of these places take on a random character, which cracks in the person the effectiveness of the feeling of fear of the unknown (Al-Amiri, 2008). Moreover, the hostile place according to Bakhtin is: the narrow place that is reflected in the psychological state of the individual, it is the place in which he feels narrow even if it is spacious, like the presence of a person in a foreign country, no matter how spacious and privileged that country is, it is a narrow place for the psyche of the resident in it (Madqan, 2005). This is what was present in the novel "Al-Muhsina Village Days." The city was a hostile and frightening place for the people of the village, as he said:

أولئك الذين يأتون إلى زيارة أصدقائهم وأقاربهم في القرى، حيث ينتعلون الاحذية والملابس المستعملة التي تباع بأثمان زهيدة، رأيهم مكشوفين على حقيقتهم. رأي اكواخهم الطينية، المستنقعات والوحول التي تحمل كل نتانة المدينة وقذارتها ومياه غسيلها. وابوالها وغائطها ... واقدام بلون إسفلت الشوارع، واجسام تنضح بالعفن كجثث الموتى .... وقف امامهم، مدوا ايديهم لمصافحته، لم يعطهم يده. بل خاطبهم قائلاً: أنزلوا ايديكم لا تقتربوا مني أنتم ما عدتم نظيفين. كان يخاطبهم وهو مطرق نحو الارض، وعندما رأى دموعهم قال بصوت يخنقه الالم: لا تبكوا.. ارضكم تنتظركم بكل نظافتها وحبها لكم

Those who visit their friends and relatives in the villages, where they wear used shoes and clothes sold at low prices, he saw them exposed for what

they are. He saw their mud huts, the swamps, and the mud that carries all the stench of the city and its filth and its washing water, its urine and feces... and feet the color of the asphalt of the streets, and bodies oozing with rot like the corpses of the dead... He stood before them, and they extended their hands to shake his, but he did not give them his hand. Rather, he addressed them, saying: Put your hands down, do not come near me, you are no longer clean. He addressed them while he lowered his head to the ground, and when he saw their tears, he said in a voice choked with pain: Do not cry... your land awaits you with all its cleanliness and love for you (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

In the text, the novelist describes the way of life of everyone who lives in the city, describing them in a way full of humiliation and contempt, to the point that he considers everyone who lives in the town to be unclean ("Put your hands down, do not come near me, you are no longer clean"). In another text, the novelist describes the villager's feelings when he enters the city, as if he enters a state of dizziness and a coma from which he does not wake up except with some of the purity of the village, such as his saying:

كلما اقترب من المدينة اشتدت انفعالاته المتناقضة، لم تعد الريح تهب من جهة واحدة إنها تهب من كل الجهات، وكل ريح تحاول أن تستأثر به لنفسها، شعر بالدوار، أوقف الفرس قرب ساقية ملاء بالمياه، ترجل عنها، أخذ غرفة بيده وغسل وجهه، عاد إليه توازنه، نظر نحو الأعلى، السماء زرقاء صافية، الريح محملة ببقايا رائحة الحصاد، مازالت تلك البقايا تعطي للأرض طعم الحياة....

The closer he got to the city; his contradictory emotions intensified. The wind was no longer blowing from one direction; it was blowing from all directions, and each wind was trying to monopolize him for itself. He felt dizzy. He stopped the horse near a waterwheel filled with water, got off it, took a handful in his hand, and washed his face. His balance was restored. He looked up. The sky was clear blue, and the wind was laden with the remnants of the harvest scent. Those remnants still gave the earth the taste of life.... (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

Then the novelist describes the villager's feelings towards the city's buildings and its people, and the fear and disgust he feels when seeing the city and its people, as he says:

كم تحاشى المرور قريبا من هذا المبنى الذي يثير في نفسه الاشمئزاز، وإذا اضطر للمرور قريبا منه خفض بصره حتى لا يراه، لكنه الآن يقف قبالة، الباب عال، درفتاه الضخمتان مفتوحتان على سعتهما، عند مدخله يقف شرطيان يقابل أحدهما الآخر، ويمسك كل منهما ببندقية، تمنى العودة من حيث أتى، راسه يزدحم بالأسئلة جسده محشو بالمخاوف ...

How he avoided passing near this building that disgusted him, and if he was forced to pass near it, he lowered his gaze so as not to see it, but now he stood in front of it, the door high, its two huge doors wide open, at its entrance two policemen stood facing each other, each holding a rifle... He wished to return from where he came, his head crowded with questions, his body stuffed with fears.. (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

The novelist takes it as if he is comparing the village and city schools. Fear surrounds the student, and he thinks of nothing but escape, as everything frightening is based on war and fear, not joy, as he says:

أمام بوابه مدرسة – الكميت الحديدية كان غالب يمسك والده بقوة، تماما كما لو كان ذلك الطفل الذي يدخل المدرسة لأول مرة، ضربات قلبه تتسارع، جسده يرتجف، قدماه تحملانه بصعوبة .... هذه المدرسة لا تشبه مدرسة القرية، يحيطها سياج حجري عال... كل ما يحتاجه التفكير بطريقة تمكنه من الفرار، انه يشعر بكراهية لا توصف إزاء هذه المدرسة ... عدد التلاميذ كان كبيرا، كان مجرد النظر إليهم يشعره بالاختناق ..... هذا النشيد لا يشبه أناشيد مدرسته، تلك التي تتحدث عن عناديل تغرد فوق غصن شجرة، وبصوت هادئ عذب، عصافير تزقزق، حمام تغني – نشيد هذه المدرسة يتحدث عن شيء مختلف تماما، انه يتحدث عن رؤوس من الحرب تلمع، وهي قادمة من البعيد.

In front of the iron gate of Al-Kumait School, Ghalib was holding his father tightly, just as if he were a child entering school for the first time. His heartbeat was accelerating, his body was trembling, his feet were carrying him with difficulty... This school was not like a village school... A high stone fence surrounded it... All he needed to think of was a way to escape. He felt indescribable hatred towards this school... The number of students was large. Just looking at them made him feel suffocated... This anthem was not like the anthems of his school, those that spoke of lanterns chirping on a tree branch, and in a sweet, calm voice, birds twittering, doves singing - this school's anthem spoke of something completely different. It spoke of heads of war shining, coming from far away (Al-Yasiri, 2011).

The village school has joy and reassurance for the individual starting from going to it in the morning and returning from it, unlike the city school,

which is terrifying for the individual and is based on fear and strength, starting from its construction, its teachers, it is frightening anthem that the students sing in the morning, everything in it is based on fear. The negative sequences that describe the state of the city are a natural and consequential result of the city's outcome, which tries to deepen the gap in the most obvious places in its negative position towards the characters, its hostility directly by relying on strength, as it is an attempt to confirm the unfamiliarity of the place and the inability to live in it.

The research concludes that the city is a frightening place for the villagers. It is a place based on fear and everything unclean and innocent. It is a place similar to hell, unlike the village, which is based on cleanliness. It is a piece of heaven.

### Conclusions

An authentic narrative link exists between place and other narrative elements (character, time, event). The author focused on shaping the novel's elements, linking them with interconnected relationships. Through these relationships, he was able to embody his vision of lived reality and give the narrative texts a semantic and aesthetic dimension. The themes of the narrative texts imposed an intimate relationship between the characters. This intimate relationship was generated between several places and characters, especially the narrator. The study revealed an intimate relationship between the narrator and the village where he was born, and demonstrated the hostile nature of the relationships between the characters and certain places, such as the city. The author's vision in his narrative texts imposed two patterns of place: the friendly place/the hostile place. These patterns contributed to shaping the narrative cycles and sequences in the novel, revealing the nature of events, the characterization of characters, and time, and imposing narrative styles and the novel's language. The setting offered a detailed account of the real-life village, which profoundly impacted the formation of the narrative character. The benefactor is presented as a narrative piece on the ground. Narrative styles also varied between the omniscient and the subjective. The language used in his treatment of the setting somewhat resembles the language of ruins, its metaphors, and its associations with the specific spatial theme.

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There is no conflict of interest.

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First Author: Manuscript writing, idea, resources, discussion.

### Data Availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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