



## The Semiotics of Pictorial Discourse in Ahmed Khalid Tawfiq's *The Legend of the Late Night*

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### Abstract

This paper analyses visual discourse in Ahmed Khalid Tawfiq's *The Legend of the Late Night* (2002) by investing in semiotics as a critical method, gripping the essence of the image, especially if it involves an imagination imbued with horror literature, as it will give rise to a kind of novelistic narrative through the enjoyment and amazement at the new form that jumps to the mind to formal camouflage with an artistic and functional impact. The prominent approach to tackle this reading is characterized by its ability to analyze literary discourse, reveal its secrets, and interrogate its symbols to reach its goal or approach. Critical reading is considered a simulation analysis of the conceptual procedure through analyzing the physical form of the sign within the discourse or image, studying the semiotic units such as words, colours, shapes and images, and then linking the signs to their cultural, social and other contexts, and an attempt to observe the effect of narrative employment of two types that come together to establish a genre that inspires in terms of novelty and excitement; they are: the semiotics of the image and horror literature. The research problem can be defined by the question that searches for the nature of the encounter between method and procedure. In other words, how suitable is the semiotic approach for analyzing Arab novelist discourse and revealing its secrets? The conclusions lie in completing the accumulated knowledge to enhance the energies of the different genres and in an attempt to cross-fertilize some genres capable of producing their fruits due to valid hybridization in a place where procedure and employment interact.

**Keywords:** semiotics, discourse, visual, novel, myth

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## Introduction

Ahmed Khalid Tawfiq's *The Legend of the Late Night* (2002) extends through a series of events through a critical representation to clarify the pictorial images parallel to the narrative text, as the novelist has invested the idea of wielding images to express the characters' situations. Studying the image as a parallel text gives the reader a conscious activity characterized by accurately monitoring ideas and visions. Because the imagination that relies on visual observation requires less time to represent and imagine events and then arrange them within a readable procedural series parallel to the verbal, the language, as a result, comes in the first place. In contrast, the visual image capable of semiotic comparison comes in second place. Therefore, their partnership cannot be broken, and sometimes, the visual image is more effective in complying with the semiotic approach.

The research adheres to the methodology adopted in writing scientific research in terms of description and analytical procedure. Despite the availability of studies that adopted the analysis of the visual discourse, a review of the available literature indicates the scarcity of previous research that deal with the study of the semiotic analysis of the novel according to the image. Despite the availability of some related studies, they focus mainly on different fields, as they adopted their analysis from a semiotic perspective that allows the exploration of the symbols and signs employed in the text to understand how tension and horror are based and their impact on the reader, by deconstructing the denotations of characters, events, and spatial and temporal atmospheres. The research aims to bridge this knowledge gap and provide a specialized analysis.

## The semiotics of the cover is a symbolic technique

The term semiotics falls under the name of the science of signs, or the science of symbols...etc. Perhaps we need to pass the concept into two types of knowledge, in order to maintain the cognitive consistency of the concept, but within the framework of brevity. Knowing the part dispenses with knowing the whole, and showing the model dispenses with it prolixity and augmentation.

In Western understanding, semiotics is a term that has gone through a series of theories represented by its pioneers, perhaps the most prominent of whom is (Peirce), as he started his study from the science of signs (semiotics). As for de Saussure, he approved the name "semiotics" (Bankrad, 2012, p. 9), and Dr. Saeed Bankrad expressed it as: "the study of life Signs within social life" (Bankrad, 2012, p. 9). This expression was summoned from the lessons of the linguist de Saussure.

It is worth noting that semiotics and semiology are a manifold approach that has several definitions according to different schools and theorists, and despite the difference in the two terms as "it is understood from this that semiotics is an American cultural given - basically - that

refers to comprehensive philosophical concepts and non-linguistic signs, while (semiology) is a European cultural given that is closer to linguistic signs and the linguistic field in general than to any other field, as if the former had a more ancient history and a broader subject matter than the latter, in addition to their differences in the field of geography of trading (Weghlisi, 2008, p. 228).

### **Cover Images with the backdrop of arts and emotions**

The words may be narrow, but the image is not narrow in its reference to the artistic influence, as it is the important threshold for entering new realms and tempting forms that lie between reality and imagination. It is not just a mental projection or artistic luxury, but rather a true belonging and a mature vision of the inner significance of the artistic work. (Al-Safrani, 2008, p.131). The image has the semiotic vision carries the interactive character that expresses the representations of man, society, and what is related to it through symbolic connotations and mental representations that match and intersect to produce meaning.

The cover image is a code of the text that remains betting on its acceptance in the milieus to which it is sent. The cover is considered the most widely used and indispensable theme, as it is the first part that meets the eye of the recipient. The cover can be analyzed into two types: the front and the back.



**Image 1.** The front cover

The front cover is a major threshold for a literary work, as it includes the reality of the novelist's experience as he tries to express the inner space, as well as making the reader aware of the parallel text. There is a hidden vision that the novelist wants to be a gateway to open interpretations, as evidenced by the fact that we are trying to give an interpretation of the

components of the cover image, and so on with the reader; Therefore, the most important text block in the novel, represented by the title, is placed on the cover.

Thus, the cover of the novel can be (a visual identity that we must accept as one of the identities of the text. The cover is the first to achieve communication with the reader before the text itself. It is the mouthpiece that provides a reading of the text and thus places the features, signs, and identity of the text (Najmi, 2000, p. 22).

Therefore, the cover can be considered an icon of acceptance, popularity, or rejection of the literary work. Paying attention to it contributes to nourishing the mind of the reader. The

reader's participation is like enticement, which feels accepting the challenge and entering the writer's realm because he possesses the vision that is absent in the body of the literary work, because the external context is part of a whole that parallels it and expresses its states. We can comment on the cover from two perspectives:

The title is subject to a network of mental perceptions. When measuring the indicative connotation, we clarify the ideological depth of the mind that produces the semiotics of the title, which is represented by that textual bulk that is usually small in size and has an extension that includes the content and sometimes even departs from it to create new bridges outside its cognitive and linguistic pragmatic framework that work to establish other realms. It is suitable to be combined with the representations of the social system resulting from the state of participation in the various situations of society. The meaning of the title usually results from the influence of the internal pressure of the procedural system, and this requires monitoring a textual structure with an intense cumulative meaning, in addition to employing the arbitrary and non-arbitrary cover image that appears due to the internal narrative of a novel.

Therefore, the title "is a poetic contract between the writer and the writing on the one hand, and a reading contract between him and his audience and readers on the one hand, and a commercial/advertising contract between him and the publisher on the other hand. Therefore, the publisher can intervene in selecting the title in accordance with this contract...; to achieve the two values: the aesthetic and poetic value of the book, and the commercial and advertising value of the publisher" (Belabed, 2008, p. 71).

The Late Night Legend is the theme of the literary work and its visual and written impact on the reader through the semiotic approach. If we conduct a semantic survey on the utterance, a speech act appears to us of three words representing "a group of linguistic signs consisting of words..., indicating its overall content, and attracting its target audience" (Belabed, 2008, p. 67). What can be deduced from the title goes beyond the semantic extent, as the first meaning is revealed by the power of the first reference, that is, the directness within the sign, while the deep meaning is the connotation inherent in possible contexts through signs that refer to it (Bankrad, 2012).

Therefore, it is the responsibility of the reader to try to produce the central meaning through what can be said "observing the conditions for producing the meaning is observing the cultural that operate as laws based on which all facts are interpreted" (Bankrad, 2012, p. 264). It is important to differentiate and note an important matter related to the title, which is followed by a bulk of text, or a sent verbal utterance in the case the audience and readers receive it. The audience is a general term that aims to receive the title in the abstract without considering its content, but rather merely receive. This is what is called title reception, but the reader is different

because he receives the title and its text. Thus, the title becomes an authority that exercises its role visually and publicly among the mass of people and thus they circulate it communicatively (Belabed, 2008). After this illumination, we return to reading the title semiotically. Therefore, a group of questions trigger in mind that leads to search for the answer or form it and interrogate it through the narrative text. So, are we dealing with an ordinary novel, a myth, or a different genre in which the novelist collects events inspired by imagination that have no relation to reality? From all of this, we try to identify the real relation between the title and the text.

Therefore, it can be stated that the title represents “a semiotic system with semantic and symbolic dimensions, which encourages the researcher to trace its connotations and attempt to decipher its symbolic code” (Qatous, 2001, p. 33). Thus, we can receive its functions as a mandatory specification according to its ability to participate and integrate into the narrative body. First, it is represented by: the specific function (Belabed, 2008): This reference is mandatory for the writer, as through it the reader verifies the birth of the title and then determines the field of specialization, and thus the writer must be precise in selecting the name to be far from the pitfalls of chaos and disorder, and to ensure sound circulation among readers (Ibrahim, 2023). It is worth noting what Abdelhak Belabed quoted from Gerard Genet, as he acknowledged the importance of the conformity function and considered it one of the most important functions; because it seeks to achieve consistency between its titles and texts (2008).

The associative function: The semiotic reading of the title is based on enriching the text by understanding the associative relationship between the title and the text through associative employment. Association does not necessarily have to be a function achieved intentionally in the text, as it is not one of its functions to lead to all its internal relationships, but rather seeks to attract the reader by associating to him something that enhances his acceptance, as it “illuminates the mode that the reading will take” (Kilito, 2007). This is supported by what Robert Schulz sees, as he linked the semantic structure to a special process that the reader accomplishes through the semantics of suggestion contained in the text (1993). Third: The attractive function: This is the most prominent function that attracts the reader towards the text to explore its depths and identify its references. Paying attention to the title urges the writer to achieve two values: an aesthetic value conditional on achieving poetics in the text, and a commercial and commodity value that attracts the reader and pushes him to get it to reveal the ambiguity and strangeness in its ideas narrative (Belabed, 2008).

The semiotics of the title of the novel *The Legend of the Late Night* favored its acceptance in both the moral and material contexts, as the writer was able to combine the functions of the title between specification, association, and attraction. All of the above seeks to illuminate the text from the aspect it represents, especially since he attached the title to an existing context. On the cover is the phrase: (Metaphysical Series), then he gives it a number that represents it within the series, which imposes an obligation on the reader and attracts to link its events together. Once the reader enters the text, he finds that he is strengthening that connection and harmony by mentioning a group of future titles that It is related to a series of current events, and what is important to mention is that the title has a clear extension over the entire text, and its three words (Late Night Legend) give indicative condensation, as the word (legend) alone represents a world that exists on its own because of the excitement and interpretations it contains of what the reader can expect or imagine. ; Because it is “a fairy tale dominated by imagination, in which the forces of nature appear in the images of living beings with excellent personalities, and popular

literature is based on it" (Wahba and Al-Muhandis, 1984, p. 32). Then, invoking the word myth indicates a state of excitement and terror in terms of employment, as it represents the seed of mutants, as the myth is surrounded by many hostile mutants. represented by the supernatural, unseen human being, and the understanding of (Darko Sovan) comes in line with making it represent the metaphysical literary genre that parallels the idea of the miraculous and the fantastic (Halifi, 2007, 76). It seems that knowledge, according to Dr. Ahmed Youssef, represents the cohesion of (myth and language as a form of man's symbolic creations, as both are a system with A semiotic nature, which is why the myth was treated as if it were a linguistic sign that has a signifier and a signified (2005, p.68). This means that the myth represents a semiotic field full of connotations and symbols, both of which help in reading the visual image and approaching it semiotically, in addition to the composition of (the end of the night), which is the second part that determines The element of time has a psychological and semantic dimension and is subject to many interpretations. What can be observed is the structure of the words of the title, which indicates the nominality of the sentence, which indicates stability and capability.

The cover of *The Legend of the Late Night* represents a line parallel to the body of the novel, as the writer chose one of its scenes to be a window into its ongoing events, especially the scene of the nightmare that left an extinguished torch under his sheet. Above the cover is an owl bird, as if it constitutes a technique that the writer is trying to symbolize the time of events and their relationship to the colors used. The red eye color of the owl symbolizes fear and perhaps the blood that inspires terror. He was not satisfied with that, but left us with an incomplete owl that flies with a quarter of its wings, and the reason for this is an exchange of nightmare roles. Her dismay, fear and horror stare at him from all directions as he tries hard to remain awake, thinking that he will escape the corridors of nightmares. Then drowsiness hinders him and takes him to other worlds in which he goes while facing a fate that almost takes his breath away. Therefore, he claims that the dream resembles "a terrible book... It takes you through caves that no human being has ever visited before. They are the caves of your own self, which are more mysterious and terrifying than any caves in the regions of Siberia, the deserts of Africa, or the mountains of the Himalayas" (Tawfiq, 2002, p. 90).

Reading the cover in one go gives the reader enough space for contemplation and interpretation, as analyzing the cover image takes a semiotic perspective to embody the novel's scenes from one of its angles overlooking the reader's mind. Perceptions are capable of producing a visual vision that can be placed in different realms. The shot of an owl took on its true color with wide eyes, but it struggled with sleep until it became red from being awake. As for its place on the cover, it occupied the upper part of it with an area of approximately one-third. As for the title, it occupied a specific path in the middle of the cover from the upper third, and it was separated by a zigzag line that almost revealed the appearances. Another is related to the complexity of its scenes, and this is linked to the other part of the title, which is the time represented by (Late Night). The image placed on the remaining part of the cover, which is the largest area, represents a model of late-night scenes, here the reader must scrutinize the semiotics of the image and see that hidden blending by employing imagination and summoning scenes inspired by the subconscious realm that a person experiences during his sleep while he clings to very horrible events.

The reader is supposed to keep in mind that the cover image, with its details and use of colors, is subject to direct penetration in parallel relationships with most of the narrative structures and textual accompaniments that create a relationship that gives the cover its dimension in the face of the textual transcendences and the functions wielded starting from the title (Tabish, 2016). There is no escape from being preoccupied the mind with the details of the image. As it is considered a code that can be deconstructed and its symbols investigated. When the fragments of narrative structures and their events are collected in a specific time journey, which is the end of the night, the phenomenon of the complex visual envelope emerges, as the image began to combine different relationships indicated by the events of the novel, and it deals with reality through the imaginary by employing the components of the miraculous. The strangeness that delves into the imagination to search for the contradictory reality, so we find the events of the novel furnishing worlds rich in contradictions that lead to a dynamic narrative that seeks to describe the phenomenon of tension and terror that is represented in the narrator's society (Al-Moosa, 2014, p. 56). The cover image, with its dark color, remains a glimpse of the events and tries to attract the reader to explore its depths, revealing its secrets and the breadth of what is hidden behind its walls.

The back cover is the final threshold in which the paper space is closed. (Al-Safrani, 2008). Here, I will not dwell on the analysis of the cover image because the aim is to analyze the formal discourse employed in the narrative text. As a matter of understanding the thing, we resorted to a semiotic reading that reveals the feature of employment and its purpose. The back cover includes a line that corresponds to what is found in the front cover and matches it completely, as it is located in the upper third, and it was written on a space The upper third, colored in orange, is a black phrase (metaphysical), and beneath it written in red the phrase (Breathtaking novels of extreme mystery, horror, and excitement). As for the middle of the space, he placed a circle that is almost the most prominent, in an orange color, as if something was dripping from it, and a very concentrated summary was written inside it. He says: (The legend of the late night. Today we present to you a rather amusing topic: nightmares that leave a definite physical trace in your bed... a torch - for example - or a key or an amputated hand. This phenomenon only occurs at the end of the night so that the day remains untouched by you... but you hold on to the hope that it will come quickly.) With this text, the space of the back cover is closed, as it is an advertising signal or a kind of temptation for the reader to delve into it, looking and contemplating these material effects.



Image 2.

Next to this circle is a image of the writer, and his name is written under his image: Dr. Ahmed Khalid Tawfiq. The last part of the cover is marked with a zigzag line, and the space underneath is also colored orange; a small yellow window is placed in it, in which the place of publication is written. To the left is written in black: The next issue is The Legend of the incubus, as if the narrative is clinging to the reader, seeking to capture him and signaling a new work and an open narrative its purpose is communication.

### The Semiotics of the Images as a Parallel Text

The ability of the visual image lies in expressing conscious and unconscious mental perceptions that exceed the verbal expression. Thus, the visual image achieves a semiotic difference in producing aesthetic mechanisms that give pleasure to reading as a text that can be interpreted, which “requires a new and different awareness loaded with cognitive means that decode it away from preoccupation. With moral intent only” (Hilal, 2009, p.134). Therefore, the novel includes scenes that occupy the largest part of its space, but it devoted space no matter how much the writer was able to invest the energies of the symbolic images that revealed the depth of the writer’s awareness of the experience. In one of the nightmare adventures, the nightmare scene is depicted in a symbolic painting in which the character of the novel appears. It struggles in the middle of that battlefield and turmoil, trying to find an explanation for what is called incubus (Tawfiq, 2002, p.11).





**Image 3.**

Here we have to employ the visual image technique that makes us feel the presence of an internal force that pushes the narrative to progress despite the darkness of the nightmares. In a scene filled with terror and fear, the symbolic image tries to summarize many of the lines in its following painting:

The image goes on in a semiotics shrouded in mystery, and it tries hard to be clear, but not this time. The nightmare moves slowly, as the narration gives a crowd of conflicting events. It stands in amazement, looking at that thing that resembles ghosts. It seems that the narration took place in an ancient time, as he says: "There is a key in the door... a giant, strange-shaped key filled with those decorations that represent the past... the past in which people had the time and clear mind to create these miniatures" (Tawfiq, 2002, p. 16).

The visual painting remains very mysterious and dark, as it is filled with unclear features except for that person who is going through a crisis that comes to him during sleep and takes him through unfamiliar corridors and hostile places. That ghost clearly appears, extending his claws with a huge black body that resembles a fantasy superimposed on top of each other, and in a scene that draws a picture of that. The person trying to escape to reach the palace, as (there were only a few meters left and.. the silver candlestick.. the torn curtain.. a dusty fresco showing a knight sticking his spear in the chest of a lion.. spiders and.. my heart almost stopped" (Tawfiq, 2002, p. 17). In a more chaotic manner, the painting appears, which we understand to include a knight, a lion, and a spear, and that huge ghost is still in front of him, and in astonishment he says: "How did he get out of his prison? I do not understand... perhaps there was a back door or... is there a logic to nightmares? It is here and that is enough" (Tawfiq, 2002, p. 17).

The statement holds true when it is considered a parallel text (since the image has its formative and representative properties, it is not permissible to manipulate it, such as: linguistic structure by substituting, introducing, deleting, or delaying, which can express hundreds of ideas. It is a non-linguistic symbol, containing semantic units that cannot be manipulated or

analyzed into smaller units which have no purpose in themselves, as they are tangible signals, but they achieve a communicative purpose (Eid, 2021, p.1256).

It can be noted that the psychological effect is one of the nutrients of the visual image because it has a clear control over nightmarish scenes. Therefore, the visual image is a theme that can be read and analyzed as a parallel alternative to the textual structure, and the role of imagination comes in embodying horror literature through the nightmares that control the dramatic event. Hence, imagination and how to present a nightmare dream in a visual context represents a great challenge for the creator of the work, because the conscious events or what is happening while awake are no different from the nightmare dream itself, and this is what requires creating the dream scene in a unique way and different from what it is in consciousness. Therefore, the advantages of horror literature can be identified in the nature of the dramatic structure based on paradoxes, surprise, and excitement, as well as the use of characters and events in an effort to furnish horror through a formulation that is shrouded in mystery and arouses fear (Ahmed, 2022, pp. 209-210).

We can represent the picture that shows a person holding a torch in his hand, and he sometimes calls it in his Egyptian dialect abajur (Tawfiq, 2002, p. 35).



**Image 4.**

This painting represents a figure that hides more than it shows, as it represents his psychological state. The person shown in it suffers from psychological problems that appear to him in the form of terrifying nightmares. It seems that his subconscious mind has produced his daily nightmare when the hour of the wolf arrives at the end of the night, and in it the sleeper is at his weakest and most vulnerable state (Tawfiq, 2002, p. 54) And the terrifying dream began to make its way. The space in which the nightmare occurs is filled with negative physical and moral scenes. Screaming and running in narrow corridors, and the emission of foul, putrid odors from the walls of the corridor immersed in darkness, represent a semiotics of a state of terror.

As the events continue, he passes advising describes everyone who experiences such nightmares to search for ways of salvation away from being influenced by self-obsessions, as looking back leads to stumbling and confusion, and terrifying thoughts occupy his mind: What if the passage is blocked? (Tawfiq, 2002, pp. 30-31).

The nightmare scene is still continuing, and its events are accelerating. The flame emanating from the torch indicates running in narrow spaces, and the place seems to represent a strange, hostile place that fits with the idea of the psychological pressure that the character is experiencing. We can choose a text parallel to the image that represents the true reflection of the vision, as it expresses that scene when he said:

I am now in complete darkness... but I hear the sound of something coming... it does not roar like any respectable beast... rather it emits a regular roar like the roar of the refrigerator... This is definitely the sound of the refrigerator in my ears, and my subconscious mind has found a place for it. In the nightmare... just as he does with the sound of the alarm clock and the phone... there was a torch on the stone wall next to me... a torch taking his last breath for an unknown reason... and in the dim golden light surrounding him, I realized that I was right... the passage is really blocked. (Tawfiq, 2002, p. 32)

The pictorial scene must answer regular semiotic questions in the field of non-linguistic pictorial experience, as it represents the shadow of the text and is considered a reflection of the linguistic, conversational signs surrounding the text that can be analyzed and interpreted, especially as they simulate dreams of horror and reveal nightmares with a psychological structure that are linked to events in an indirect way to the context of the pictorial scene (Ahmed, 2022, p. 214). According to that semiotic conception, meaning can be reduced to the functions that the expedient, imaginative, and affective image may perform. The image expresses scenes that go beyond what words depict, in addition to the accumulation of connotations. Then, the image has a semiotic ability that opens channels of linguistic communication for benefit. Every sign has a useful meaning (Eid, 2021, p. 1257).

We can take a third image in which we review the reflections of the dreams furnished by horror literature, as they attempt to paint for us a picture through the path of imaginative thinking accompanied by states of illusion and reality in an attempt to escape from a crisis reality that a person lives in amidst a crowd of nightmares, and all of this is captured by semiotics. To embody its signs in a pictorial scene that is suitable for taking up a parallel space in the parts of the body of the novel.



**Image 5.**

In this pictorial scene, the central character tries to get out of the world of nightmares and their representations of horror, despite his extreme abhorrence of this experience, but the semiotics of the scene prove his inability every time, as he is confused in thought, and his psychological state appears to be in crisis. So he decides to spend the night outside the house, and at this moment he acknowledges the strangeness of the place and its hostility to him, as it has become an environment in which he feels terrified, so he chooses the café as a familiar place, but the semiotics of horror haunts him at the end of the night, when the hour of the wolf came, that character traveled in a new world of horror filled with hostile places that resemble myths. Monsters and demons, and ancient places that stifle his breath, and narrow corridors, and caves, and red liquids, and smoke rising from volcanic lava (Tawfiq, 2002, pp. 53-33). One can imagine the ugliness of the scene and the arousal of terror in it, and here the narration speaks, saying: “I began to groan and groan and retreat... and... Oh Professor!” (Tawfiq, 2002, p. 56). This phrase indicates a narrative overlap between the end of the nightmare scene and the beginning of a tangible reality when the coffeemaker said: “Master, do not sleep, this is not a hotel” (Tawfiq, 2002, p. 56). With this phrase, the narrative returned from its travel to conducting a new dialogue that represents a reflection of the lived reality and disdains the way of dealing with it. With others, the visual scene refers to the semiotics of reality, as the hero’s character wears a formal suit; because he represents the field of education, he is the mathematics teacher, and the chemistry of reality shows the extent of the suffering experienced by education, while the other person represents the hostile world that carries hatred and always seeks to humiliate education and call for ignorance of the world.

Dr. Saeed Bankrad sets a condition in which he expresses the significance of visual images between the subjectivity of understanding and their use of cultural codification. He believes that visual semiotics, although providing references to apparent similarity, does not provide us with a neutral representation that constitutes a separation from human experience.

Therefore, the visual facts constitute a linguistic code that accepts the detection of connotations from within semiotics, which represents a cultural code (2013). The successive social representations represent a pattern of human use that contributes to revealing the content signs within the visual given.

### **The Semiotics of the Visual Image and Its Impact on the Discourse of Horror Literature**

The concept of horror is connected to literature, which is what we aim to know and consider its nature and the relationship that exists between it and the narrative. The basic principle is that we look at the linguistic meaning of the word horror, as it extends back to ancient times, as a “cosmic horror appears as an element of ancient folklore specific to all races, to be crystallized in most ancient tales, records, and sacred writings. It was indeed a prominent feature of ritual magic, including the rituals of conjuring demons and ghosts that flourished in prehistoric times and reached their highest levels in ancient Egypt and the Semitic countries” (Lovecraft, 2021, p.19). Ahmed Khalid Tawfiq is considered one of the founders of horror literature in the Arab world, as he defines it: “a very special type of literature that aims, through a group of interwoven events, to arouse a feeling of terror and fear in the reader” (Tawfiq and Dakhil, 2006, p. 10). This part seeks to establish communication between the items of the research. It also aims to achieve harmony and coherence to produce a kind of excitement in employing a literary art that is popular in the realm of narratives.

It is not exaggerated if we say that such a character employed in the work of fiction seeks to manage events between reality and imagination by combining the realm of nightmares and going out into the real world, which has become boring and monotonous to the point of repulsion and frivolous imagination which turns horror into a material with which he plays until the discourse of the image is shared within Influences through which he tries to understand what is going on around him, then what occupies him, and who is wrong in all of it, and is he right or is he the only one who always makes mistakes in the society? Perhaps he has not succeeded in integrating into the public space, even though his attempts point to identifying areas of strength (Kikodze and Adamiani, 2023, p. 213).

Perhaps this approach is true for the mathematics teacher, who did not reveal his explicit name other than the symbol for him (H) (Tawfiq, 2002 p.12 ), as he will experience nightmarish dreams expressed in visual scenes that seek to bring the distant closer together and announce visual semiotics that can be analyzed and interpreted, but it remains locked in mystery, despite the visual perception of its features.

We have to find representations of horror literature in parallel concepts that would emulate this category, which is intertwined due to similarity in function and procedure. The fantastic is one of the most prominent representations of horror, as it represents “multiple motives in which the Arab present stands broken and dispersed in literary expression, so the fantastic becomes an eloquent means of expressing... daily nightmares of individual and collective defeats, and a constant and terrifying fear of the erasure of identity as a result of

successive external and internal strikes, in addition to violent fantasies that imitate the aborted dreams of the Arab being” (Halifi, 2009, p. 53).

Horror literature can appear in other forms, as the miraculous represents one of the fields that participate in enhancing horror literature. Todorov said about it “the hesitation felt by a being who knows nothing but natural laws, while he is facing an event that is apparently supernatural” (1993, p.18). As for Dr. Saeed Alloush, he considers it “a form of storytelling, in which the characters object to new laws that oppose the laws of experimental reality, and the characters in this miraculous genre decide that the laws of reality remain as they are” (1985, p.146).

It seems that horror is based on the severity of the violation that only appears in comparison to its laws, while the miraculous places the recipient in the face of the loopholes of the system and the laws of reality, and perhaps this is the main source of the horror that the miraculous arouses (Khalil, 2014). Thus, it seeks to mix “the real with the imaginary with the aim of excitement and suspense and spreading extreme terror and fear in the recipient’s psyche” (Hussein and Al-Dbow p. 359). Horror comes from the representations of the world of nightmares, which is an important form of horror literature, as “fiction and how to present the nightmare dream in a pictorial context represents a great challenge for the creator of the work, because the conscious events or what happens while awake are no different from the nightmare dream itself. It requires constructing the dream scene in a unique and different way from what it is in consciousness” (Ahmed, 2022, p. 209).

The events of the novel feed the idea of horror and represent the formulation of literature in terms of its various worlds, as the idea of the incubus that haunts the hero every night seeks to create a new realm whose events he invents and creates from the subconscious and is reinforced by (the Necromancer), which is a form of black magic based on interrogating dead bodies (Tawfiq, 2002 p.44) It is related to satanic events and actions that have the effect of moving the narrative from terrifying nightmares to perceptions mixed with physical reality, and it is evident in the following semiotic image parallel to the events of a horror dream that summarizes the events of the narrative and summarizes them, as reading it semiotically allows for its interpretation and gives the reader the ability to analyze its partial elements before their events meet and get entangled.



**Image 6.**

Although the image came in one color, which is the normal color, it indicates its colorful events, and colors have their significance in psychology, as they indicate the disturbed soul, and the narrative proceeds and is burdened with absolute horror. At times it blends with reality and at other times it penetrates into the world of imagination to establish horror literature by employing techniques for integrating events and adhering to the element of time that is central to the events of the narrative, which is the end of the night, as the dialogue takes place between a real character and ghosts from another world. Using a human bone, a key, and a torch in unreal events is something that every person experiences, but to find what we use in nightmares is real, it is something unreal. It is reasonable, and all of this and the semiotics of the events are not yet complete. The presence of torches with human skulls and bones filling the place is an indication of frightening worlds that indicate the semiotics of fear and psychological disorder in the character of the hero, and all of that appears clearly in the visual scene, in addition to the dialogue filled with threat and intimidation conducted by the necromancer. The character's semiotics expresses his terrifying image as he wears a black cloak draped over his face, with steam rising from a cauldron in front of him, and he stirs what is in it with a wooden stick (Tawfiq, 2002, pp. 44-48).

Therefore, visual semiotics requires that it be loaded with meaning and capable of analysis. In this case, semiotics works to utilize the image scenes in enhancing the world of imagination, and we do not lack the reader's attempt as he turns to the text in an effort to read the image semiotically, and this turning between the text and the image is considered a reading contribution that occurs as a result of visual listening. The mental image is formed by mixing the text with the image. When viewing the image, visual listening is done to the text, and when reading the text, listening is done to the image, so hearing and sight are achieved simultaneously (Hilal, 2009).

Linking the events together produces their semiotic connotations, which are evident in the image with a bad psychological dimension. It seems that the hero's character suffers from psychological complexes that he struggles to find solutions to. Every time the hero appears in a



formal suit as if he is suffering from a psychological disorder in his home, perhaps because he feels inferior due to his inability to have children (Tawfiq, 2002, p.29 ). In addition, the pressure of reality forces him to vent himself by criticizing the living reality, as a person who works a teacher needs additional work to help him meet the requirements of life since the government does not care about the condition of this important section of society (Tawfiq, 2002, p.29 ).

Elsewhere, the narration presents the nature of dreams, saying: “Freud believes that dreams do not have any predictive ability. Rather, he believes that they are the expression of our subconscious mind, which is liberated at the time of sleep, and begins to reveal itself and its suppressed, repressed desires” (Tawfiq, 2002, p. 89).

The narrative continues to go through a new adventure that is no less terrifying than the previous one. The narrative text tells the nightmare using language tools, drawing a moving scene that tries to reveal all its details using the technique of visual images with mental expression, and then semiotics intervenes to bring the series of events closer together with a desire to enhance the scene and add more horror and excitement in accepting the events. The aspects of visual semiotics can be observed in the divisions of the image that indicate the movement of events and the use of narrative. The image captures what is hidden and unspoken, and the transformations that accompanied it (Al-Dbow and Abbaes p. 44 ). The relationships that the image highlights are represented in the issue that touches on the idea of the strange world that searches for cultural implications that establish open spatial and temporal spaces.



**Image 7.**

The image expresses a field of wheat that reinforces that narrative, saying: “There was a field of wheat extending in front of my eyes to infinity, which had that brutal yellow color characteristic of the paintings of the Dutchman’ Van Gogh” (Tawfiq, 2002, p.95). It is noticeable that many pages of the novel include the names of Western and eastern characters that point to some of their works that include issues related to horror, nightmare dreams, and others, which work on a semiotic approach that seeks to strengthen and highlight the scene.



The narrative space expands and extends to make the nightmare last more than hours, while the nightmare extends for a few minutes or perhaps only a few seconds. But it includes events of density and diversity. Perhaps it delves into the depths of the human soul, working to design and shape events that go beyond the limits of the exotic, breaking the system and sacrificing the familiar to cross its borders into the unfamiliar. It seems that the image works to transmit its signals. The incubus, the bruised hand wrapped around the hero's ankle, the wheat field, and the abandoned palace are all signs that interpret the image through the visual vision system, which gives the contemplator an increase in untangling its interconnected bonds through linguistic functions. For example, the incubus is a ghost represented in different shapes. It is usually large and has other characteristics, and the amputated hand is another element of the nightmare, and then he finds it in reality between the bed covers (Tawfiq, 2002, p. 96).

## **Conclusion**

There is no doubt that the events of the novel try to tempt the reader with the technique of employing visual images to enhance the idea of horror, and terrifying events usually occur in reality, so it becomes necessary for the writer of the text to go beyond the events of reality to draw scenes that are characterized by mystery and uniqueness with their different dramatic narrative that carries within it a structure that includes dramatic paradoxes work to disrupt the human thinking system, with the intention of stimulating shock and raising fears and horror. The role of semiotics in all of this is to enrich the semantic depth between the visual image and the concept of the narrative that establishes horror and excitement. Semiotics works to approach and strengthen the bonds of connection between the image and the textual body.

Analyzing the image semiotically in this type of novel has produced results that can reveal the discourse that accepts the visual image as a reality that allows it to be read semiotically. The narrative's commitment to a kind of employment grants the characteristic of continuous excitement, as reading nightmares semiotically is in harmony with revealing the psychology of the human soul. The semiotic approach is a pioneer in finding various ways to feed and reveal events, to allow for their interpretation, especially when reading the visual image in a semiotic approach, which indicates the combination of other types in addition to the use of the word myth such as the fantastic, the miraculous, and the strange. The study also emphasized the importance of employing horror literature. Because it works to enrich the events and makes them more influential and acceptable to the recipient because of their similarities in terms of real events and the era of science fiction, which no longer accepts cold events, but rather searches for excitement and fear. The research revealed the desire and ambition to embody nightmare dreams and translate them into visual representations that can be examined and read by sight. Therefore, the title "The Legend of the Late Night" has had an impact in furnishing the world of horror, as the significance of a legend is sufficient to prepare the ground for horror, in addition to the time of events allocated at the end of the night.

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