

## SAUDI NOVEL: COMMENCEMENTS, EFFORTS, AND HEADWAY (7)

**Yahya Saleh Hasan Dahami**

Albaha University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

ادبنا العربي يحكي قصة تاريخ، والتاريخ يذكرنا بحضارتنا العربية الخالدة التي يجب علينا  
ان نعيد سبكها بقالب جميل للأجيال (يحيى دحامي).

Our Arabic literature tells the story of history, and history reminds us of our immortal  
Arab civilizations, which we must recast in a beautiful mold for future generations  
(Yahya Dahami).

**Abstract.** The novel is seen as a social expression or product that is amenable to analytical examination, just like any other tangible item in society. In this way, the novel is a reflection of reality as well as an extension of it. In addition to reflecting or manifesting reality, the novel is meant to have its own impact on it. The best creative writers are essentially observers of reality or those who essentially use their writing as a cathartic outlet for their innermost concerns. The secret to their excellence has always been their unique openness to the struggle for a free and just world and their deep human yearning.

In keeping with the purpose of the literary analysis, the researcher employs an analytical-critical method in this literary work. The study begins with a brief description of the novel's inspiration before continuing on to discuss a concise review of the Saudi novel as a literary work and an outline of the Saudi novel. The following section of the essay provides critical insight into the writer Gimashah Al-'Elian's illustration, "The Female Spider." The conclusion and useful conversations round out the study.

**Keywords:** *Arabic novel, Arabic literature, Gimashah Al-'Elian, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Saudi fiction, Saudi novel, The Female Spider.*

**\*Corresponding Author:** *Yahya Saleh Hasan Dahami, Albaha University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*  
e-mail: [dahami02@gmail.com](mailto:dahami02@gmail.com)

**Received:** 22 March 2023;

**Accepted:** 28 April 2023;

**Published:** 26 May 2023.

### 1. Introduction

Many critics and those interested in the literature of the novel point out that the novel originated in the embrace of popular culture with its multiple rituals, including societal ones. The novel was built on some ancient prose texts and medieval accounts. One of the advantages of this public origin was that it gave the narrative a great ability to absorb the cultural elements of the lower classes in society. There is no doubt that the literary form known as the novel has occupied a privileged position in contemporary Arabic literature in general and Saudi literature in particular. This literary genre is able, within a short period of time, to expand the circle of its addressees to the extent that it becomes competitive with poetry, which throughout the history of Arabic literature was a high pyramid that no other literary genre could reach.

The novel gives accounts of numerous occasions, eras, and locations. This necessitates that the author be an expert in event history. In addition, he should be a social researcher who is knowledgeable about every detail so that his narrative has credibility since he treats the incident as though it actually occurred. It necessitates a thorough

examination of all the patterns in the surroundings in order for it to seem natural and to give events realism. All that is socially or realistically happening around a man attracts him. "The novel is truly a literary and creative structure that expresses, in its narrative language, historical, cognitive, and emotional awareness. It is the structure that is associated with the historical stage of human life, with all its historical awareness, breadth and depth, informational accumulation, and various connotations" (Ibri, 2009).

Moreover, there are those who argue that the novel is a series of events that are narrated in a long prose narrative that describes fictional or realistic characters and events in the form of a sequential story. It is also the largest of the anecdotal genera in terms of size. What distinguishes the novel is the multiplicity of characters and the diversity of events. The novel appeared in the world as an influential literary genre in societies. It is a story that relies on narration, including descriptions, dialogue, the conflict between characters, and the tension, controversy, and events that this entails. Therefore, the novel has a great function in that it promotes the human side and creative imagination. "The novel is one of the most important narrative forms that have taken center stage in modern literary studies" (Si Ahmed, 2022).

The Arab nations were distinguished by their multi-nationalism. Each of these nations fought to gain independence. Despite the fact that the Arab countries share characteristics like language and religion, there are cultural and intellectual differences that set each one apart from the others. "The elegance of the Arabic language can be seen in a variety of literary genres, including prose, rhetoric, novels, folktales, grammar, morphology, and derivation" (Dahami, 2022c). As a result, the Arab novel's scope has expanded to more accurately reflect the reality of the Arab personality. Furthermore, "There is no doubt that the duty of literature to spread the culture of patriotism is tangible throughout the ages and in various places" (Dahami, 2022a). From the city to the countryside to the desert, and from the member of the clan to the member of the same family to the expat individual who has no connections to others, it is simple to show the Arab character. As a result, it was determined that the Arabic novel embodied national identity, personal judgments, and originality by accentuating the components of romance from the beginning. The protagonist in the Arabic novel is shown to have a personality distinct from his surroundings.

### ***Objectives of the Study***

Viewers may benefit from learning the types of aesthetic developments made at each stage by going through the Saudi novel's several stages of development. The study intends to offer insight into the rise and significance of Saudi fiction by tracing its beginnings, development, and significance as a notable literary form. The goal of this analysis is to examine and determine what makes the transitions and changes in the Saudi narrative different. The goal of this inquiry is to evaluate and identify the development and expansion of the Saudi novel, with a particular emphasis on the example novel, "The Female Spider" drawn by the novelist Gimashah (the first letter G is articulated as in get) Al-'Elian.

### ***Research Method***

The information discovered by this kind of investigation would have been exposed by a thorough analysis of the literary techniques. These are crucial, especially when presented analytically. It proves the usefulness of a thorough evaluation that considers the play's use of both visual metaphors and portrait insertion. The features that fit the

current sorting strategy for analysis and the predicted social models will both have an impact on the study, as the critical-analytical-descriptive technique illustrates. There are several sections in the work.

The initial part offers an overview of a few analytical viewpoints, ideas, and evaluations of the novel as a literary genre. Next, the illustration and analysis of the novel "The Female Spider" by author Gimashah Al-'Elian serve as a measurement of the novel's development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In the final phase, the investigation is summed up with a discussion, recommendations, and a conclusion.

## 2. Saudi Novel: Concise Review

Any form of literary creation experiences the same stages of emergence, growth, and development as a human, from conception to old age. The Arabic novel as well as the Saudi novel, like all literary forms, started out with basic techniques and evolved alongside Arab civilization as a result of socially significant intellectual revivals.

Saudi Arabia's literary production has significantly increased during the past eighty years, especially in the fields of drama, poetry, novels, and autobiographical works, which necessitates continual analytical research in the study of the nation's literature. Saudi literature should be analyzed in light of a number of characteristics that distinguish its structure and content (Dahami, 2023b).

In the 20th century, the Saudi novel went through more than two stages of growth. Some literary critics assert that the social novel serves as a reflection of society because literary works typically reflect social events in some way. From its inception in 1930 through establishment, experimentation, and renewal, the Saudi novel has come a long way. Novels passed through some stages before they reached the teenage period of the topics and transitioned from local to globalism, from simple traditional beginnings to artistic and traditional alternate phases to good sorts of renewal. Furthermore,

the novel is, from a literary point of view today, of mostly historical interest, but its publication is nonetheless significant both as an indication of the extent to which the novel form had engaged the attention of the leading udabÅ' of the day and as confirming the predominantly autobiographical trend in novel writing at the time (Starkey, 2006, p. 117).

The characters interact with the events and the medium in which these events interact, just like in the Arab novel in general and the Saudi novel in particular, to ultimately attain a social, intellectual, or ideological consequence. Several critics claim that the Saudi novel has gone through a number of stages in its development, stages that can help us understand the type of aesthetic development done at each stage. The novel "fulfills its primary generic purpose as a reflector and advocate of social change" (Allen, 2003, p. 188). It is shown that Saudi Arabia's social developments coincide with important social changes, starting with the unity of the nation. The prosperity of the economy has also increased people's awareness of and interest in discussing and emphasizing social issues in numerous circumstances and through various media, including the social novel. Although the Saudi novel proceeded slowly in the fifties and until the seventies, it quickly took off in the decade of the eighties of the last century. This is due to society's social and material boom and the economic, intellectual, and cultural transformations (Al-Bail, 2016, p. 29).

Because the novel is primarily written to be read, which demands a high level of education, the introduction of the novel to Saudi Arabia was delayed due to the country's initial level of public education. Because most Saudi novelists come from small villages and still desire this simpler, more practical way of life, Saudi novels frequently prefer rural life to city life. This transformation was shown through the presentation of the many narrative concerns, the aesthetics of the narration and how it evolved from one stage to the next, the use of particular topics, and the daring with which certain stages of the novel's development were handled. Whether the presentation of the several tale subjects or the aesthetics of the narration as it moves from one stage to another are to blame for this shift in tone over the course of the novel.

Both in terms of subject matter and creative development, the Saudi novel has undergone significant transformations. These changes have corresponded with significant changes in the region and Saudi society as a whole. On the other hand, the novel, from this perspective, becomes a literary form born of social experiences, due to its depth and significant adjustments due to the utilization of particular topics, as well as the extent of the boldness in dealing with different stages of the novel's growth. Its aesthetic and cognitive makeup changed instead.

Critics pay close attention to Saudi literature, in part because Saudis are seen as a homogeneous ethnic entity that embraces the same language, religion, and culture. A civilization, not a people, but a civilization, is immortalized in Saudi literature. Men and women of the widest range of ethnic backgrounds who yet managed to maintain their language, habits, traditions, and customs while being influenced by their Arab culture made up its contributors. They become integrated into a new, larger nation after being shaped into a unity of thought and belief. Literature includes a wide range of genres and serves as a mirror for societies, reflecting their culture. "Saudi literature's impact is apparent in [the] rhetoric, writing, poetry, and literary works by various Saudi and Arab writers, along with literary figures. The foremost effects and inspirations of Saudi resurgence or revitalization can be comprehended as historical, didactic, and educational" (Dahami, 2023c).

In addition, "it has proven the exceptional and admirable qualities of Saudi literature's lasting legacy" (Dahami, 2022d). The novel, as a genre of literature, is viewed as a social expression or product that may be subjected to critical analysis just like any other piece of inanimate societal property. In this way, the novel serves as a window into reality, a result of reality, and a subject for inquiry.

The social novel, which constitutes a substantial section of critical studies, is typically addressed alongside the relationship between literature and society. Their strong friendships have drawn criticism from some. Interpersonal connections, particularly those that have an impact on Saudi families, are one of the main social challenges. A number of literary works by Saudi authors have been required to address these socioeconomic issues due to the socially wealthy's influence on Saudi culture.

Despite its importance, a study of this kind will analyze the novel through the development of each narrative stage's aesthetic setting rather than paying much attention to the discourses that molded their experience or attempting to explain their absence or presence from one stage to the next. According to a number of critics, the Saudi novel is a parallel text to reality that draws as much from reality as it does from its own questions, presumptions, and interrogations. The people require the text of the literary future and the space of dialogic intersections. It is distinguished by accepting transcendence and difference, allowing for interpretation, and accepting pluralism.

Marriage, divorce, and women's status are only a few of the social topics brought up in the Saudi novel. Concerns have been raised concerning the Saudi novel's content and whether it qualifies as a work of art that reflects the realities of this country. In order to view the fictional and narrative works in the Kingdom as a historical and social document that expresses the breadth of the changes this civilization has undergone over decades, many literary critics looked for the biographical dimension in it.

The Saudi novel raises societal issues such as marriage, divorce, and the status of women. It also raises issues of identity, the identity of minorities, whether religious or racial and ethnic minorities, political crises, and the repercussions of the Gulf War on society. Controversy has arisen about the contents of the Saudi novel and whether it can be considered an artistic testimony to the reality of this society. Several literary critics searched for the biographical dimension in it to consider the fictional and narrative works in the Kingdom as a historical and social document that expresses the depth of the transformations that this society has undergone over decades (Dahami, 2023a; Saleh, 2014).

Several critics mention that “Literature and art have social functions that they can only perform by traversing their subjects and experiences from the reality of contemporary life in their respective societies. This is what gives social experiences their special importance in modern literature” (As-Sebaei, 2019, p. 73; Mandour, 2006, p. 78). One of these important genres, which is indispensable for social culture, is novel, with its many forms. The apparent reasons why the novel is more likely than poetry, drama, or essay to become the art form that will mirror the most bottomless considerations of new or rejuvenated nations have to do with the form of the novel, on the one hand. On the other hand, it has to do with the aptitude for dramatically illustrating social and psychological matters.

Additionally, they contribute to enhancing the domestic literary scene, which lights the torches of light via literature of all genres. A poet, a novelist, a dramatist, or another literary character will always have a deep love for their country of origin inside of them. This love will be in all human hearts. Additionally, emphasize the novel in particular. All of this had an effect, and as a result, different socioeconomic classes especially the educated class—became more alert. As the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was almost entirely bereft of this literary genre, the learned and enlightened class increased its desire to discover and improve the literature of the novel.

In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and all of its manifestations, the novel is not only for amusement and delight, just for preaching, or just for rambling in the world of dreams and imagination as in the novel *The Female Spider* by Gimashah Abdul Rahman Saleh Al-'Elia; all of this is regarded as incidental. Furthermore, it might be argued that the novel's structure and subject matter make it more likely than poetry, theater, or essays to become the literary vehicle that best captures the most fundamental concepts of developing or revived societies. Regarding the truth, the novel was primarily focused on watching reality and exploring ways to support its positive aspects while also identifying its flaws, such as through the use of a mirror to identify mistakes that can then be fixed.

### **3. Gimashah Al-'Elia and the Female Spider (1)**

Gimashah Abdul Rahman Saleh Al-'Elia, born in Riyadh, studied in the same city. She studied for a bachelor's degree at King Saud University and then moved between

several jobs, such as laboratory technician, as her specialization is in the field of chemistry. She then worked as a teacher, student counselor, editor-in-chief of "Our Healthy Life" magazine, and also as a member of the Saudi Arabian Society for Culture and Arts. At the Arab level, it has a clear contribution, as it is considered a member of the Arab Writers Union. "In the present age, a large number of Arab writers of literature have made contributions to stories, novels, and plays, including" (Dahami, 2022b), Gimashah Abdul Rahman Saleh Al-'Elia. She is also a member of the World Assembly of the Youth of the Islamic World. Gimashah is also a member of a number of story forums in the Arab world, as well as some women's associations.

The novel revolves around a Saudi family in Riyadh that suffers from the father's oppression of the family's members and his control over them according to a tyrannical patriarchal culture, which results in an implicit hatred towards him. The father's control in this way, which the novelist portrays, turns the house into a hell full of all kinds of injustice and suffering. The result is family disintegration and dispersion. The characters of this family consist of "Abu Saleh", who represents the model of the dictator-father. According to the novelist, he is governed by strict societal customs and traditions that leave his family members no space for freedom, in addition to the cruelty resulting from a wrong understanding of the meaning of guardianship.

However, in Islam, guardianship is positively understood in the sense of men as guardians of women. Guardianship is a responsibility, a duty, an obligation, respect, veneration, care, benevolence, and compassion. These are some of the qualities of guardianship in Islam that should be understood. Allah Almighty says "الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ" (سورة النساء: 34). "Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means. Therefore, the righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allah and to their husbands), and guard in the husband's absence what Allah orders them to guard (e.g. their chastity and their husband's property)" (Al-Hilali, 1997, p. 112, Surat An-Nisa, verse 34).

The novelist starts *The Female Spider* with an inquiry about freedom. She doubts that there is any sort of freedom in her thought that is inscribed on papers. She says:

ما هي الحرية؟  
 أتساءل عن معنى تلك الكلمة الساحرة الرائعة الحارقة .. أنا المكبلة بالأغلال وقيود لا تري وقضبان تحيطني  
 من كل الجهات .. هل الحرية هي السعادة، الانطلاق، التحرر من كل شئ وأي شئ، أم هي حرية الرأي،  
 حرية الكلمة، وحرية التفكير، أم تراها الثورة على التقاليد والأحكام البالية المتوارثة من الاف السنين..?  
 (Ghamdi, 2020, p. 84; Al-' Al-'Elia, 2000, p. 9)

What is freedom?

I wonder about the meaning of that enchanting, wonderful, burning word.. I am shackled by shackles, unseen chains, and bars that surround me from all sides.. Is freedom happiness, release, liberation from everything and anything, or is it freedom of opinion, freedom of speech, and freedom of thought, or do you see it? Revolution against outdated traditions and rulings inherited from thousands of years..?

*The Female Spider* consists of the following main characters: the father, his wife, and his daughters (Ahlam, Badriah, Suad, and Nada); his sons (Khaled, Hamad, and Saleh); and the wife or mother (Al-Gasim, 2008). "Ahlam", the youngest daughter and protagonist of the novel, is the center of the novel as portrayed by the novelist in all kinds and practices of unhappiness. Ahlam endures her father's cruelty and struggles to

complete her studies. Later, she teaches in a remote village, where a young man from the village and an educated poet, Saad, propose to her. The writer's portrayal of the father is blurry, gloomy, and full of greed, as he refuses to marry Ahlam to the young Saad; on the contrary, he marries her to an elderly merchant. The elderly husband cruelly beats her severely with his stick, which he uses to move around the house. In her attempt to defend herself, she takes revenge on him by hitting him on the head with his crutch, on which he dies instantly.

The next character is Um Saleh, the wife of Abu Saleh and the mother of the children. She is an elderly woman who suffers from her husband's constant cruelty and violence. As a result, she developed schizophrenia, which led to her frequenting the home and the mental health hospital. Her role in the novel is flat, whether in her home or the lives of her sons and daughters. Her mental state worsens, and she is hospitalized and dies there after learning of her husband's intention to marry another woman.

Another character is "Saleh", the eldest son who loved the neighbor's daughter and announced his desire for his father to marry her. However, the father refuses his request, telling him that he will marry his cousin soon. The next character is Badriyah, the eldest daughter, who marries Ahmed, a drunk, cruel young man. Badriyah is forced by her father to endure her perverted husband despite his excessive beating and harming of her. As for "Souad", she is another character whose father deprives her of studying and keeps her away from home, getting rid of her constant problems with his new wife by marrying her to an older man.

The male characters, Khaled and Mohammed, run away from their father's oppression and then enroll in school. After a while, the two sons find work and get married abroad. The next character is Nada, who develops a disease similar to her mother's and dies in a mental health hospital by suicide after taking too much medication. Here is a commentary on the author's point of view when, through her plan, she makes Nada's character commit suicide by overdosing. The comment is that the writer is a Muslim and knows from the religion of Islam that whoever kills himself or commits suicide by any means will be punished by hell because he or she has not completed his faith in a creator who is destined for ordeals, hardships, adversities, and difficulties in life.

We often read about suicide in societies that are weak in their religious beliefs and that view life as eternal life. These ideas are not in the Muslim community unless ignorance of the provisions of the tolerant religion prevails in this society. The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever kills himself with something will be tortured by it on the Day of Resurrection." See more at (Al-Nisaburi, 2019, p. 74; Al-Nawawi, 2017, p. 101; Al-Asbahani, 1996, p. 179).

For further clarification, we recall the hadith documented by Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him), who says: "We witnessed Khaybar with the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He said about a man who claimed to be a Muslim: (This man is of the people of Hell. However, when he attended the fighting, the man fought fiercely and was wounded, so it was said, O Messenger of Allah, who you said was from the people of Hellfire, he had fought today fiercely, and he died. The Messenger of Allah said: While they were on that, it was said that he did not die, but he had severe wounds; but when it was night, he did not have patience for the wounds and killed himself; the Prophet has been prophesying about that. He said, Allah is the greatest. I testify that I am the servant of Allah and His Messenger. Then he commanded Balala to call out to the people, No soul enters Paradise except a Muslim soul, and Allah sustains

this religion with the wicked man’)." See more at (Al-Asgalani, 2019, p. 224; Safwat, 2017, p. 415; Ibn Taymiyyah, 2012, p. 275).

"The novelist Gimashah Al-'Elian soared in the sky of imagination as she unleashed the letter to sail in the waves, to transport us with her through words to the world of the story" (Abdel Rahman, 2018). The novelist might be either influenced by Western literature and imitate it in her own invention, or she might be oppressed in one way or another. She clearly neglected the positive, decent, and virtuous traditions and cultural conduct of Saudi society—the core of Islam.

In the novel "The Female Spider", the novelist records two revelations in a dream. The first concerns the vision of the central character, Ahlam," of her deceased mother and sister. The first recommends that she not leave him, and the second covers her face with her hand while laughing. Here we find a superficial description that does not reach a deep degree of consciousness but carries a suggestive connotation in the fabric of the novel. It comes in the context of Ahlam's acquaintance with Saad, to whom she relates despite her father's opposition and his prevention of their engagement. See more at (Al-Ghamdi, 2020, p. 42).

The mother appears telling her daughter not to abandon him, reinforced by little Nada's laughter and her shyness in covering her face with her hands. Ahlam responds to the commandment, for which her life and freedom are later paid. The novel lacks any indication of the interpretation or rendition of the dream. This may be a cognitive deficiency in the writer. It is assumed that the dream is anticipatory of the future of the nascent relationship between the dreamer and his ambition on the one hand, and the owner of the eager relationship on the other, and the possibility of achieving this, such as the relationship that is supposed to be completed by coupling the characters of Ahlam and Saad.

The second dream is more related to the consciousness and feelings of the writer, Gimashah Al-'Elian, reaching the stage of symbolism that affects the construction of the story. There is a positive shift in the writer's ability to narrate an acceptable logical and realistic axis, even if it is sensed through a vision in a dream. When she sees Ahlam standing on top of a mountain, she looks alone at others down the mountain, saying goodbye to them. In this situation, we realize that she only recognizes the face of "Sabah", despite the familiarity of the faces of her depositors.

The importance of the dream comes from linking the construction of the story through the sequence of events in the novel. A few days later, the car of Abu Rashid, who carried them every morning to the village school, overturned, and everyone died, leaving only the dreams of the only survivor. Ahlam wakes up from her dream and continues to narrate, recounting the rest of her day in an internal monologue that stretches throughout the novel. It is a proactive dream that embodies the future. If it is not fully reflected in the narrator's style, it has had an impact on the construction in terms of the use of verbs that denote the present tense, in addition to the logical connections between events.

#### **4. Discussion**

The novel "The Female Spider" by the novelist Gimashah Al-'Elian presents various issues that the author imagined about the reality of women in Saudi society and the oppression imposed on them by social customs and traditions that rob them of their freedom and decision-making in matters related to their fate. It can be said that this novel



included a relatively realistic approach to women's issues and problems and the consequences of these problems that threaten the family entity and society as a whole.

The issue of women's oppression and physical and psychological violence stems from a wrong perception of masculinity and femininity and the consequent concept of guardianship. On the one hand, men are often classified as full of mentality, competence, and ability, and on the other hand, women are classified as deficient in mind and religion, and their social status is at a lower mental level than men are. It means that they need to be educated and guided, even with punishment. This trend has consequences for women's physical and psychological health and the health of their children, and it extends to society and threatens its existence as well. This issue is central and most present in this novel in particular and in Gimashah Al-'Elian's novels in general. In this novel, the author portrays the relationship of women with men as evidence of male dominance.

A voice of woman writer, Fawzia Shweesh Al-Salem, comments on the novel, declaring that "The Female Spider" is a nightmarish tragedy in the full sense of the word. All its events are successive calamities and tragedies that do not end with any glimmer of a point of light that leads to any joy or a normal life similar to what people live everywhere. It is the story of a family whose fate is controlled by a tyrannical father who resembles most fathers.

In the Gulf cities, far from the civilized current of life in the capitals, where man is the master. He commands, and the rest of the family is dependent and enslaved; the wife is completely submissive to him and has no choice but to say "There is neither might nor power except with God", which she pronounces in all circumstances and towards everything. Misfortunes befall her family; she sees the father marrying off his daughters to old men who are sick, addicted, or abnormal without expressing any objection or solidarity with her daughters. His first wife died of grief (As-Salem, 2014).

Is the writer honest in presenting it with logic and rationality, or is there bias? Irrational is a generalization. There is no doubt that anyone who proposes something similar to what Fawziah Al-Salem put forward is tainted by a lack of credibility, even in part by generalizing it to Saudi and Gulf society. The writer-critic is supposed to have credibility and honesty in what is presented as his or her point of view.

## **5. Recommendations**

Conceivably, the researcher might not agree with the logic of what the novelist Al-'Elian put forward in her novel, which is the subject of the study, in terms of portraying the head of the family as an oppressor, devoid of mercy in his dealings with all family members. However, this work is considered a Saudi literary production in the field of the novel, which has its advantages and its obligations. In fairness, this study is literature for the sake of literature, since its main objective is Saudi literature in general and the Saudi novel in particular. From this point of view, the novel *The Female Spider* by Gimashah Al-'Elian deserves to be dealt with in many academic and research studies in order to highlight the factors for the development of Saudi literature in its many aspects.

## **6. Conclusion**

Through this brief study of the course of the Saudi novel, it becomes clear to us that the Saudi novel was established in its traditional form. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, it has been developed little by little, via the contributions of several

novelists, until it reached the contemporary stage. It now falls under the banner of neo-realism and symbolism that blend with novelist fantasy. Such realism is always looking for a more novel and witty form, inspired by heritage and not hostile to contemporary and modernity. Social realism depicts the simple man in cities, villages, and rural areas in order to call for literature that raises the status of society through the human being and his dignity, liberating the land from the illusion of ignorance, and adopting equality among people.

The Female Spider by Gimashah Al-'Elia has contributed to the headway of modern narrative in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. After the birth of the Saudi novel more than seventy years ago, at the hands of the first generation of literary pioneers such as As-Sebaei, Al-Ansari, Maghrabi, and many others, new contributors shared their thoughts on how to lead the ship of the Saudi novel, such as Gimashah Al-'Elia, irrespective of her bias against man. What is significant is that Al-'Alia has a clear impact and an effective involvement in the development and progression of the Saudi novel.

## References

- Abdel Rahman, F. (2018). The novelist Gimashah Al-'Elia and the critic Iman Al-Tunisi in an evening at Al-Ahsa Literature. <https://www.alyaum.com/articles/581038/لروائيةقماشةالعلبان-والناقدةايمانالتونسي-فيأمسيةبأدبيالأحساء>
- Al-'Elia, G. (2000). *The Female Spider*, Egypt: Rashad Press Company.
- Al-Asbahani, Abi Naim Ahmed bin Abdullah bin Ahmed (1996). *Al-Musnad extracted on Sahih Al-Imam Muslim 1-4 Volume 1*, investigation by Muhammad Hassan Muhammad Hassan Ismail Al-Shafi'i, Lebanon: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah.
- Al-Asqalani, (2019). *Fath Al-Bari: An Explanation of Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Part VI, Beirut: Dar Al-Fikr for printing, publishing and distribution.
- Al-Bail, Faris (2016) *The Gulf Novel: A Reading in Cultural Patterns*, Amman: Sharikat Dār al-Akādīmīyūn lil-Nashr wa-al-Tawzī' (Dar Al-Acadimiyun for Publishing and Distribution).
- Al-Gasim, Ahmed Mahmoud (2008). Reading in the novel, (The Female Spider). <https://www.diwanalarab.com/14677/قراءةفيرواية->
- Al-Ghamdi, Hanan Abdullah Suhaim. (2020). *Stimulating the Dream (in the Saudi Women's Novel)*. Cairo: Dar Bint Al-Zayat for publication and distribution.
- Al-Hilali, M. T., Khan, M.M. (1997). *The Noble Qur'an: English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary*, Al-Madinah, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an.
- Allen, R. (2003). *An Introduction to Arabic Literature*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Al-Nisaburi, (2019). *Sahih Muslim. Volume 1*. Beirut: Dar Al-Fikr for printing, publishing and distribution.
- Al-Nawawi, Muhyiddin Abi Zakaria Yahya ibn Sharaf. (2017). *Sahih Muslim, with an explanation of Al-Nawawi, Hadiths numbered 1-10 with indexes*, Vol. 1, edited by Abdul-Baqi, Muhammad Fouad, Lebanon: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah.
- As-Salem, F. S. (2014). The Female Spider. <https://www.aljarida.com/articles/1462358017090917200>
- As-Sebaei, F.F., Al-Shamali, N.M. (2019). Cultural Heritage Paradigms in the Saudi Novel, *Journal of the Faculty of Arts, Port Said University*, 14(14), 63-104. <https://dx.doi.org/10.21608/jfpsu.2019.56371>
- Dahami, Y.S.H. (2023a). Saudi Novel: Commencements, Efforts, and Headway (3), *Nady Al-Adab: Jurnal Bahasa Arab*, 20(1), 79 - 94. <https://doi.org/10.20956/jna.v20i1.24573>
- Dahami, Y. S. H. (2023b). Saudi Drama: Commencements, Efforts, and Progression (4), *Islamic History and Literature*, 1(1), 47-57. <http://jomardpublishing.com/UploadFiles/Files/journals/IHL/DahamiY.pdf>

- Dahami, Y.S.H. (2023c). Home in the Poetry of Saudi Arabia Poets: Abdus-Salam Hafeth an Example of a Distinguished Arab (4), *Islamic History and Literature*, 1(1), 5-15. <http://jomardpublishing.com/UploadFiles/Files/journals/IHL/DahamiYHS.pdf>
- Dahami, Y.S.H. (2022a). Home in the Poetry of Saudi Arabia Poets: Abdus-Salam Hafeth an Example of a Distinguished Arab (5). *Aksara: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*, 23(2), 115 - 130. <http://dx.doi.org/10.23960/aksara/v23i2.pp115-130>
- Dahami, Y.S.H. (2022b). The Role of Muslim Women in the Narratives of Ali Ahmed Ba-Kathir, *Journal of Social Sciences, International, Scientific Refereed Journal*, Issue-(26), 352-371. <https://democraticac.de/?p=87184>
- Dahami, Y.S.H. (2022c). Home in the Poetry of Saudi Arabia Poets: Abdus-Salam Hafeth an Example of a Distinguished Arab (3). *Ihya al-Arabiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Arab*, 8(2), 14-26. <http://dx.doi.org/10.30821/ihya.v8i2.12118>
- Dahami, Y.S.H. (2022d). Home in the Poetry of Saudi Arabia Poets: Abdus-Salam Hafeth an Example of a Distinguished Arab (6). *The Cradle of Languages ASJP Algerian Scientific Journals Platform*, 4(3), 81-95. <https://www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/208336>
- Ibn Taymiyyah, Taqi Ad-Din Abi Al-Abbas Ahmad Al-Harani (2012) *Tafsir Ibn Taymiyyah (The Great Interpretation)* Part 4, Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-‘Ilmiyah.
- Ibri, Kamal Jabry (2009). The Specificity of the Arabic Novel. *Yearbook of the College of Islamic and Arab Studies for Girls - Alexandria*, 25(3), 593-621. <https://dx.doi.org/10.21608/bfda.2009.147142>
- Mandour, M. (2006). *Literature and its Arts*, Cairo: Nahthat Misr for Printing, Publishing and Distribution.
- Safwat, A.M. (2017). *The Prophet's Prophecies in the End Times*. Vol. 1, Egypt: Ummah Science Foundation for Cultural Investments.
- Saleh, H. (2014). The Saudi Novel: A Bold Speech Revealed the Silenced-in Society. <https://aawsat.com/home/article/33346>
- Si Ahmed, A. (2022). The Arabic novel: the question of Identity, *Afanin Al-Khitab*, 2(1), 141-151. <https://www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/downArticle/801/2/1/196922>
- Starkey, P. (2006). *Modern Arabic Literature: The New Edinburgh Islamic Surveys*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.