

**A Critical Reading Between Textuality and Symbolism in The Novel “ Bed Hopper” by Ahlam Mosteghanemi
A Formative Structural Approach**

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Abstract:

This critical study seeks to present a formative, structural approach to the novel *Bed Hopper* by the Algerian novelist Ahlam Mosteghanemi, exploring the dialectic of the relationship between textuality, with its poetic language and shifts, and the symbolism spread within the folds of the novel, to explore the lines of existing awareness and possible awareness. The study takes the formative structural approach as a tool for dialogue with the novelistic text, and this is by opening up to the sociological structures and deconstructing the worldview that regulates work as an expression of a collective consciousness that goes beyond the creative self. Individualism to the group context.

The research was divided into two parts, the first theoretical, in which the conceptual and contextual frameworks and the autobiography of the creative self were defined, and the second applied, which monitored the manifestations of Algerian reality between the periods of the Algerian Revolution and the nineties of the last century. The study concluded with a number of results, the most important of which is that the novel succeeded symbolically in exposing the conflict between the self-residing in the homeland and the alienated other, and in consecrating the existing awareness of male masculinity and the dominance of the body. In contrast, the approach revealed the construction of a possible dangerous awareness at the textual level, which penetrated the audience of recipients, and was represented in the destruction of values and institutional bonds that build society, such as the marital institution, the family, the religious institution, under the pretext of fighting social hypocrisy, targeting the collective emotion through a wonderful poetic language, which contributed to social transformations and alienations.

Keywords: Existing consciousness, possible consciousness, the novel "Bed Hopper", community institutions, the poetics of the Arabic novel.

Introduction:

Many modern and contemporary Arab writers have dedicated themselves to the novel genre, and some of them have been so creative that they have made the novel the Arabs' diwan instead of poetry. It has informed about the state of Arab society and expressed its issues with a creative imagination that builds its edifice from an imagined reality or from the imagination

of reality. It establishes its pillars with times, places, and characters that its producer brought in through reflections of cognitive sediment and life experiences, which he polishes with the imagination of the creator, and arranges its social house according to cultural, intellectual, philosophical, and other references that he adopts, since the novel, throughout its imagined times, with its different places, and with the multiplicity of its characters, is considered a society in itself.

Among the creative voices in the Arab world that have achieved international acclaim is that of the Algerian novelist Ahlam Mosteghanemi, whose writing is truly masterful. Among her works that captivate readers and compel the discerning reader to pause at the threshold of its pages and delve into the depths of its imagery, generating much critical attention, is the novel "Bed Hopper." This novel draws its imagined time from real places, all revolving around the homeland as both spirit and place.

Therefore, this novel is the subject of our study, distinguished by its poetic language characterized by symbolism and allegory. We explore its sociological intricacies, seeking the mental structures that reflect social reality. Leaving aside the author's own perspective, we turn to the relationships between social and literary structures within the novel under study, aiming to answer a central question:

The relationship between textuality and symbolism in "Bed Hopper."

How did the novel express the existing consciousness? And did it reflect on the potential consciousness of the receiving audience?

To address this issue using a scientific methodology, the study adopted the structural-formative approach as its guide, while also utilizing other available critical procedural mechanisms. The study was divided into two sections: the first examined the conceptual framework and some contextual frameworks of the novel, while the second applied the findings of the structural-formative approach to answer the study's central question.

First: The Conceptual Framework

In this section, the study focused on some procedural concepts of the structural-formative approach to serve as a foundation for the study, as well as examining some contextual frameworks of the novel under investigation.

1. Why textuality versus symbolism?

The study's title includes the terms "textuality" and "symbolism." These terms were chosen for important reasons related to the study's subject matter: the existing consciousness and exploring the possible lines of consciousness through exploring the hidden depths of the narrative text. The dominant language in the narrative here is poetic language, which is undoubtedly a language of displacement, forming a comprehensive metaphor for the novelistic work, as we have seen in Algerian literature, such as Kateb Yacine's novel "Nedjma," whose events unfold among human characters. The protagonist of this novel, Nedjma, "formed its central axis; this enigmatic character whose descriptions are scattered across the pages of the novel in an artistic way that suggests she is not just an ordinary person... and her true nature can only be reached after deciphering the code established by the

author¹." Here, "textuality" refers to the linguistic concept of the word "text," not as a critical concept referring to the fabric, but as a linguistic concept that textuality is the superficial or what is apparent from something.² In contrast, by "symbolism," we mean those symbols scattered and hidden beneath the narrative text, which we come to know through reading competence and also through the reader's record of the novel.

2- The Procedural Mechanisms of formative Structuralism:

Formative structuralism established several procedural mechanisms upon which it relies in analyzing literary texts and discourses, transcending formal structuralism. This was achieved by escaping the rigid constraints imposed by linguistic structuralism, attempting to open the textual structures of the literary work to the sociological structures that influence the composition of the textual structures. By examining the terminological framework that constitutes its name (structural/formative), structuralism was described as formative, as it was based on the premise that "the true agent of cultural creation is social groups, not individuals."³ "The creator's role is limited to literary formulation, while the origin of creativity lies in the group and its collective intellectual, social, and psychological outputs. Consequently, formative structuralism views literature, between its surface and deep structures, as the literary text created by its creator, represented in its surface structure, and the ideas of the group to which it belongs, represented in the deep structures that constitute the literary product. From this perspective, formative structuralism formulated its procedural outputs in dealing with literary texts accordingly. The principle, and from here we will review the most important procedural concepts for analyzing literary texts according to the formative structuralist approach. This will be done through a reading of the book "Formative Structuralism" by Lucien Goldmann and others, published by the Arab Research Foundation.

Worldview:

Goldmann considered worldview to be the central axis around which the structural-formative approach revolves, formulating it as "the way in which a given reality is viewed, or the intellectual framework that precedes the realization of the work, it does not refer to the author's intentions, but rather the objective meaning that the product acquires independently of, and sometimes against, the creator's desires."⁴ He made it closely linked to the collective consciousness, not the individual consciousness of the creator. Jacques Linhart defines it as: "Worldview is precisely this set of aspirations, sensations, and ideas that unites the members of a social group, and often members of a social class, and puts them in opposition to other groups. It is undoubtedly a generalizing scheme for the historian, but it is a generalization of a real current among members of a group who all realize this consciousness in a somewhat

¹ Boualem Batatache, A Semiotic Approach to Kateb Yacine's Novel Nedjma, Al-Khitab Journal, Volume 16, Issue 2, June 2, 2021 <https://asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/152903>

² See: Ibn Manzur, Lisan al-Arab, entry (n-s)

³ Nour El-Din's "An Introduction to Formative Structuralism in Contemporary Arab Critical Readings," Modern Book World, Irbid, Jordan, n.d., 2018, p. 46

⁴ Ahmed Salem Ould Abih, Formative Structuralism and Modern Arabic Criticism, Egyptian Library, Egypt, 2005, p. 79

conscious and coherent way."⁵ From this definition, we can describe worldview as a concept and an operational term through which we deal with the literary product, as it is one of the most important building blocks of the consciousness of the literary text, or in another sense, it is the sum of the deep structural components of the literary text, which arise from the cognitive deposits that form the collective consciousness from which its product descends, so the creator or writer is a model that represents the category to which the creator's thought belongs.

2-1- Existing Consciousness and Potential Consciousness:

When discussing a critical concept or term, we must consider the confluence of words that constitute it. Existing consciousness and potential consciousness are both terms built upon two words that share the word "consciousness." Even Goldmann himself found it difficult to define a comprehensive and definitive definition for this latter term. He states, "The positioning of consciousness is among the fundamental words that defy precise definition, as it has a subject whose scope and structure we know little about, a subject that sociologists and psychologists cannot do without."⁶ Through our reading of Goldman's article, "Existing Consciousness and Potential Consciousness,"⁷ in which he presents social events in a dialectical framework where visions, ideologies, and policies intertwine, we arrive at the conclusion that potential consciousness is the collective consciousness experienced by a particular group, while possible consciousness is the coherent visions and ideas within that group that anticipate a new reality that will either rise up or develop the current state of possible consciousness. He cautions against confining this procedural concept to a purely descriptive reading. Rather, critical reading, according to the dialectical method, should go beyond description to productive positive analysis.

3- Contextual Frameworks of the Novel "Bed Hopper"

In this section, the study aims to answer several questions concerning the circumstances surrounding the novel's production, which are closely related to the study. Among these questions are:

- Who is Ahlam Mosteghanemi?
- What is the relationship between the imagined temporal and spatial frameworks and the novel's content?

These questions and their answers lay the groundwork for a dialectical approach that contributes to building reading comprehension skills. This, in turn, serves as a foundation for the understanding and interpretation phase in the applied aspect of the study.

3-1- Who is Ahlam Mosteghanemi?⁸

Ahlam Mosteghanemi is an Algerian novelist born on April 13, 1953. She acquired her primary and secondary education, up to the bachelor's degree level, within Algerian academic

⁵ Lucien Goldmann et al., *Formative Structuralism and Literary Criticism*, translated by Muhammad Sbeila, Arab Research Foundation, Beirut, Lebanon, 2nd ed., 1986, p. 57

⁶ Lucien Goldmann, *op. cit.*, p. 33

⁷ See: Lucien Goldmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-40

⁸ See the biography of Ahlam Mosteghanemi by Mourad Mosteghanemi, the writer's brother, as quoted from the Algerian Lamma Forum website/ <https://www.4algeria.com/forum/t/169226/>

institutions. She earned her doctorate from the Sorbonne University in Paris, specializing in sociology, where her research focused on the situation of Algerian women.

She is the daughter of a man she described on her Facebook page: "My father... the man who spent his life between prisons and exile. He didn't boast about his history of struggle, but rather about having given birth to me. I had only published a small collection of poems when he told a journalist one day, 'I came into the world to give birth to Ahlam. I want to be associated with her as much as she is associated with me.'" She comes from a revolutionary family whose collective consciousness was steeped in the uprising against the existing order, in pursuit of freedom and a life lived within its framework. She lives for the spirit of her father, who was a freedom fighter before independence and a high-ranking official afterward. He lived in exile in Tunisia, fleeing a reality rife with surveillance and persecution by the colonial authorities. These circumstances, which were carrying the birth pangs of the revolution, and its first signs, gave birth to dreams in Tunisia.

8-, <https://www.4algeria.com/forum/t/169226/>

Ahlam was no stranger to Algeria's past, nor to the present it was experiencing. This imbued all her writings with something of her father, even if he wasn't explicitly mentioned. His influence on her was indelible, beginning with his choice of Arabic as her language. She would later avenge him by choosing it as her language. Upon Algeria's independence, Ahlam was among the first group of girls to attend the Tha'alibiya School, the first Arabic-language school for girls in the capital. From there, she moved on to Aisha Umm al-Mu'minin High School, graduating in 1971 from the Faculty of Arts in Algiers as part of the first class of Arabic-language graduates from Algerian universities after independence.

In 1976, she married George al-Rassi, a Lebanese journalist of Christian faith. She withdrew from cultural life for several years to dedicate herself to her family before returning to Arabic literature in the early 1980s. This involved pursuing a doctorate at the Sorbonne University, followed by contributing articles to "Al-Hiwar," the magazine her husband published in Paris, and "Al-Tadamun," published in London⁹. Anyone who reads Ahlam Mosteghanemi's biography, and specifically listens to her interview with the television channel France 24, will inevitably conclude that this creative self carries an ego belonging to the sum of egos that accompany and contribute to her cognitive and intellectual formation, whether through academic training or social life experience, which represents her collective "we," this "we" is burdened with strange contradictions and paradoxes, embodied in:

- The "I" of the father, considered the primary mentor of the creative self, who lived through a series of contradictions along a linear timeline, from alienation in his exile to a more elevated status, then to isolation without a job or financial support, yearning for freedom, loving his homeland, and fighting for it. Despite being pursued and nearly killed in an assassination

⁹ See: Interview with writer Ahlam Mosteghanemi on France 24, November 2017
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n0vz4cgy_c4&t=406

attempt, he escaped the clutches of the colonizer, and he loved Arabic as a language, yet remained ignorant of it.

- The "I" of the husband, who differs from the creative self in religious belief, as she is of Muslim origin and he is Christian.

- The "I" of the academic institution in the Algerian university that refused to accept her for a doctorate, and the "I" of the French academic institution represented by the Sorbonne University, which accepted her.

- The creative self, learning the alphabet in her early education in French, only to be abandoned by her father within the walls of the first Arabic school for girls, as she puts it. The creative self, shifting between the sacred "we" of the woman—to the point of her confinement in Algerian society—and the "we" that views women's freedom as a form of vulgarization in French society, and finally to the Lebanese "we" that believes in the coexistence of all contradictions concerning women, I lived amidst the colonized "we" and the colonizing "we," the Algerian "we" and the French "we."

3-2- What is the relationship between the characters and the imagined temporal and spatial frameworks in the novel and the realistic frameworks?

When we talk about the temporal and spatial frameworks within the novel community and their relationship to the reality of the novel's production circumstances, we must first answer the question: When was the novel *Bed Hopper* written and where was it written? The novel had its author finish writing it on July 10, 2002.¹⁰ In contrast, the imagined time space in which the events of the novel community took place is the nineties of the last century, meaning that the novel in its time frame was a reflection and imaginary narration of a time that had actually been lived. As for the spatial space, it is only the nineties of the last century. Realistic places were invested and exploited in the construction of the novel and its events. It was closest to being a novel that derived its spatial and temporal history from the reality that preceded the time of its production. As for the characters, whether it is related to their description and symbolism or to their designations and symbolism, they are characters reflected from the lived reality of the time before the production of the novel, as the novel tells of events that took place between France and Algeria in the time of the nineties. Its events were animated by Khaled, Zayan, Hayat, Nasser, Murad, François, and so on. Ziad, the scene in the comparative framework between the narrative imagination and the historical reality has great similarity.

Second: A conscious reading of the novel "Bed Hopper":

Bed Hopper by novel by Ahlam Mosteghanemi. The reader keeps reading the title until he finds himself in front of a narrative work, studded with the language of the press media during the black decade of Algeria, and this is what we find in the verbal dictionary at the beginning of the first chapter: (Arab cities of fear, the mercy of killers, a barricade, resistance, the disintegration of a mine, its timed fuse, crying, the search for safety, death, bloody, catastrophic, fire, conflagrations, destructive ideas, dangerous ideas, checkpoints, etc.)¹¹. This

¹⁰ Ahlam Mosteghanemi, *The Novel "Bed Hopper"*, Ahlam Mosteghanemi Publications, Beirut, 2nd Edition, 2003, p. 319

¹¹ The novel, pp. 9-19

narration, which expresses a state of collective consciousness that has followed the Black Decade with interest and close attention, an existing consciousness that reflects a historical episode in the history of Algeria, other than the examining eye that goes beyond the stage of understanding to the stage of interpretation, can judge that this existing awareness expressed was only by prolonging this society that lived through the Black Decade through the window of the press media, and this is a stark expression that tells us about the vision of the world that the novel broadcasts, the vision of the world that sees reality through the window of the media based on its data, and reflects the state of collective self-consciousness. The creative, this is according to what Pierre Bourdieu calls for the necessity of excluding the idea of the creator from nothing, which is what he calls social reductionism that emphasizes the mechanical reciprocity between the social situation and aesthetic expression, or the conviction that the formal structures of the artistic work are sufficient, to confirm that each social field is subject to its own laws and arranges the activity of social people according to its own system of values, which allows understanding the general outlines of the cultural fields.¹²

The creative self's vision of the world here is directed towards the duality of self and other, represented by the self-residing in the homeland and the other in exile.

It attempts to broadcast dialogues and narrative passages with the characteristic of temporal recollection as well as anticipation, broadcasting the idea of accepting the other and coexisting with other cultures and accepting them and not stopping at the intellectual and historical idolatry represented by societal traditions in the existing consciousness. "The literary output is not a simple reflection of the actual collective consciousness, but it tends to reach a high degree of harmony, expressing the aspirations that the consciousness of the group tends towards and that the writer speaks on its behalf.

Consciousness can be conceived as a reality directed in order for the aforementioned group to obtain a kind of balance in the reality in which we live. This means that the literary work is a culmination at the level of harmony of the various currents belonging to the consciousness of a particular social group, which also means that it is a creation of reality and an expression of it."¹³

The conflict between the resident self and the alienated other is a present consciousness expressed through the novel's symbolism.

This is evident in the dialogue between Khalid and Ziyane, where this vision of the alienated other triumphs without diminishing the self. This worldview emphasizes the realism of life and disregards the world of pure ideals. Ziyane says, "Because I hate betrayal, I refused marriage. A successful marriage needs a touch of betrayal to save it; it owes its continuation to it, just as it owes its existence to it."¹⁴ Here, in this passage, we turn to its symbolic aspect, for marriage is, in its essence, the secret to the continuation of human life, and thus it points to life itself.

¹² Al-Zawi Baghoura, Language and Society: The Linguistic Question in Formative Structuralism - Pierre Bourdieu as a Model, Al-Mawaqif Journal for Research and Studies in Society and History, Issue No. 05, September 2010

¹³ Georg Lukács, Studies in Realism, trans. Nayef Balouz, University Foundation for Studies, Publishing and Distribution, Lebanon, 3rd ed., 1985

¹⁴ The Novel, p. 160

Therefore, for life to continue, it must be lived in its entirety, both good and bad, virtuous and wicked. We cannot adopt the approach of an ideal world or utopia, for that would sever its continuity. The creative self continues to disseminate its vision of the existing reality amidst opposing dualities, as seen in the passage where Ziane speaks about Kateb Yacine and his novel *Nedjma*. The narrator, speaking through Ziane, says, "It is a beautiful book with astonishing details I never knew about Kateb Yacine's death... until: And here we are, in the remainder of our lives, continuing to collect donations, as in the past, to support the families of victims of crime."¹⁵

Throughout these pages, this narrative offers a symbolic expression of the resident self and the alienated other. The creative self expresses an existing, ancient, and ongoing consciousness through a dialectical narrative, inspired by the pages of Algerian history. This conflict is represented by the narrative in the sum of the selves it recounts. The narrator mentions contrasting figures in terms of thought and life trajectories, such as Kateb Yacine/Mustapha Kateb, Abdelhafid Boussouf/Slimane Amirat, and the intellectual in... (The period of the liberation revolution/the ignorant in the same period), (the military/the civilian), (the French-educated/the primitively educated). The inclusion of all these figures in a comparative historical narrative suggests that triumphant tendency towards the culture of the alienated other. This is particularly evident in the narrative statement: "The Algerian lives the dialectic of self-destruction. He is programmed to annihilate and abuse himself when he finds no enemy to act on his behalf. You think that the criminals were responsible for the innovation of killing writers, judges, doctors, filmmakers, lawyers, and playwrights... Algeria has traditions in killing its intellectuals."¹⁶ This narrative, steeped in symbolism expressing an existing consciousness lived by the creative self and thus expressing a collective consciousness to which it belongs, speaks of a state of neglect and suicidal tendency in the collective self of Algerian society, rejecting everything that is good and everything that aspires to a better life, and everything that has the merit of anticipating a new life. The collective self rejects change and does not accept the other unless he is an enemy.

This is confirmed by the declaration of those symbols in a narrative passage spoken by the character Khaled: "I needed to reach the age of contemplation to understand that the day I laid my eyes on the keyhole, I would have discovered nothing but Constantine, of which that old house was nothing but a picture of its hypocritical traditions."¹⁷

In addition to a narrative passage that openly recounts the period of famine that struck Algeria during the French occupation, the creative self embellishes the idea of transcending religions in a wonderful narrative sentence in which reason is absent, and in which the creative self evokes the recipient's emotion and appeals to it to pass on its idea through the character of Khaled, who has always been a pivotal and heroic character, characterized by intelligence, experience and shrewdness. Khaled says: "As was his custom in helping everyone who asked

¹⁵ The Novel: 163/164/165/166

¹⁶ The novel: p. 166

¹⁷ The novel, p. 175

for his help from acquaintances and neighbors in that time - the time of famine - in which races and religions are transcended."¹⁸

1- The masculinity of the Algerian man is another existing consciousness within the symbolic folds of the novelistic text.

The novel carries another existing consciousness, namely the masculinity of the Algerian man. We discern this through several dialogues, as well as narrative passages, including a narrative passage on the tongue of the character Khaled, in which he says: "He was responsible for all the women of the earth, without distinction between their ages or their religion, responsible for their bodies and their dreams, concerned with their education and managing their future."¹⁹ This expression, preceded by a statement that was as if it were asserting the current masculinity, as the past is a time of stability and unchanged, and there is no escaping the denial of this situation and consciousness, even though the narrative passage is a retrospective passage on the tongue of the character Khaled, but the symbolism of the statement was what confirms this existing situation.

Although the novel attempts to present a positive image of Khaled, as a resident of the homeland, not an expatriate, he inevitably perpetuates the prevailing consciousness of Algerian male chauvinism. This is evident in Chapter Six during his encounter with Hayat at the art exhibition. Describing the scene of their stroll through the gallery, the narrator, speaking through Khaled, says, "I deliberately let her wander alone. I wanted to preserve the aesthetic of distance so I could see her clearly, and to spy on her memory, which hangs suspended above more than one bridge."²⁰ This descriptive scene, despite being expressed in a wonderfully poetic and metaphorical language that symbolizes the objectification of time and the search for historical details through objects, is nevertheless subtly tainted by the prevailing consciousness of Algerian male chauvinism. This is manifested through the portrayal of the situation, specifically the objectification and visual harassment of the woman's body—the body of an educated, elusive, and unattainable woman, represented by the character of Hayat. This perspective sees the woman only in her body, not her soul or her culture. In fact, her culture and mystique are seen as further fueling lust for her physical form, a point reinforced in the passage. "I didn't know why, despite that, my conversation with her only increased my desire for her. A writer preoccupied with devouring life rather than writing novels, she whets your appetite to devour her. Moreover, a woman with such a capacity for fictional deception gives you an additional pretext to lure her into a date where her fictional masks will fall away."²¹ This argument continues and is even confirmed in the fact that a man's love for a woman is translated only through the language of the body and its predatory nature. "I found no reason for my ferocity towards her, perhaps due to my excessive love for her, perhaps due to my awareness of my temporary possession of her."²² By temporary possession, he means exploiting her moments of weakness during the period of sadness she is going through. The

¹⁸ The Novel: 176

¹⁹ The Novel: 176

²⁰ The Novel: 184

²¹ The Novel 188

²² The Novel 190

novel never ceases to convey such an idea of the existing consciousness, clinging to the idea until, at the end, we find a narrative point that leaks this consciousness: "She was a mysterious woman, like houses whose windows face inwards, and it was beautiful to sit beside her perplexing femininity that awakens the accumulated emotional sediment within you."²³ Thus, the creative self was able to express this existing consciousness, and the aesthetics of the narrative.

The power of suspense in it is a sophisticated language and a picture of extreme splendor and mastery in representing its visions of the world, which suggest and hope that the woman will be liberated from the masculinity of the man and that she will not be a thing in his cognitive formation, aspiring to be a free, active, influential thinker in the intellectual record of the Algerian man, and not be among his personal calculations, but rather that he should take into account a thousand calculations instead of one.

2- The Disintegration of Institutional Values that Build Society: A Possible Awareness in the Novel's Text

Although the novel carries a heavy symbolic weight and expresses the state of Algeria, whether through its characters or through the selection of Constantine as a model or a window through which we view Algeria as a whole, its apparent scenes and narrative sections tell a captivating story in an elegant language that has drawn readers from all walks of life to it. It is part of her trilogy (Memory of the Body, Chaos of the Senses, and Bed Hopper). As has become widely known, her novels have become bestsellers and most consumed in the Arab world, with women being the primary consumers. This study examines the novel and the extent to which the potential awareness woven into its narrative is embodied by its readers. As the study previously mentioned, the novel's most important structure is its worldview, which sees women's freedom and openness to others and their cultures. However, it is narrated in a textual language through which we can almost discern the potential awareness that has materialized among its readers, thus creating a new consciousness. Among Algerian women readers in particular, and Arab women in general, as well as a different kind of awareness among men, there is a shared tendency to abandon the institutional values that build Algerian society and Arab society in general. This abandonment leads to a destruction more violent than the violence depicted in the novel describing Algeria's state between the eras of the War of Independence and the Black Decade. These societal institutions are represented by the family, the marital institution, and the religious institution. The repercussions of consuming the novel "A Bed Hopper" on Algerian and Arab women's society are reflected in the potential awareness embodied through the novel's textual language. The novel employs an emotionally charged language that targets and mobilizes the reader's emotions, portraying scenes of violence, murder, and the destruction of the Algerian body in a comparative approach between the era of colonial rule and the era of independence. By luring the reader into moments of weakness and defeat, the narrative sequences surprise us with erotic scenes, seizing every moment of vulnerability to attack the foundations of their societal institutions. This potential awareness, which is actually embodied, is the novel embellishes these romantic scenes, built upon the ruins of the woman's body. This is exemplified by the narrator's words,

²³ The Novel 308

following a lengthy narrative about marital infidelity borrowed from Malek Haddad's novel, "The Flowerbed No Longer Answers," and his mockery of the Constantine woman, likening her love to a love on a Constantine slope that could crumble at the first stumbling block. He then surprises the reader in their moment of emotional vulnerability by saying, "I seek no reward other than the longing of the first kiss. I love the beautiful extravagance of love; I have a passion for all kinds of mad waste when it comes to an emotional goal."²⁴ Prior to this, the novel had already depicted a lewd erotic scene between François and Khaled. However, the creative self did not deny this scene but rather attempted to present it as an inevitable necessity in embodying its vision of the world, which calls for coexistence and acceptance of the other. While the symbolism of the scene suggests a desire for revenge against colonial power, through the symbolism of the woman's name and the motivations behind the erotic relationship, here the scene speaks more clearly about the details of the relationship. The body is the woman's body, says the narrator through the character Khalid: "By this measure, François was a poor choice for manhood. She was a woman with two seasons, one cohabiting with the other before your eyes: the spring of her reddish hair and the autumn of her pale lips. And my first problem was her mouth. How could I sleep with a woman whose thin lips didn't entice me to kiss them?..." I hated a woman who screamed at the moment of love, for in every scream there was a deception not devoid of intentions of feminine deceit..."²⁵ These scenes tampered with the consciousness of the novel's consumers, so they became among the vulgarities that were previously taboos. The matter became as existential as it was in her societies, as mentioned in the novel: "Thus she continued to prepare the most delicious food for the mujahideen and mujahidat coming from the towering, lofty mountains... while my father was waging his liberation battles in her marital bed, meters away from her."²⁶ It became manifest after it had been hidden. The fear of taboos was called, in many places within the narrative space of the bed-hopper, societal hypocrisy, which is preferable not to be. Either we stay away or we do not approach at all, even the stylistic structure of the novel was built upon this possible awareness. Then, we find that the narrative text has used a vocabulary suggestive of the destruction of institutional relationships within the marital institution in Algerian society.

This includes the use of the word "bed." This space, my place within the marital institution, one of the most sacred and private, becomes commonplace in the novel, repeated and used in imagery throughout the texts. For example, in these two passages, "It is not humiliating to be in this position, lying with death in bed. I always went to the bed to confront love,"²⁷ and also in, "What made matters worse and made the book a rival was my habit of reading in bed. I always invited the books I loved into my bedroom because I believed that beautiful books, like beautiful women, cannot be sat with in the living room. You must have the desire to be alone with them in the bedroom."²⁸ In addition, there are many references to the religious

²⁴ The Novel: p. 153

²⁵ The Novel, p. 87

²⁶ The Novel, p. 174

²⁷ The Novel. p 171

²⁸ The Novel p 172

establishment. For instance, there is the scene discussing the religious establishment in a dialectical comparison between the scene of Kateb Yacine's funeral and the fatwa issued by the religious establishment, represented by Imam Muhammad al-Ghazali, whom the narrator describes as the president's advisor. This fatwa forbade his burial in a Muslim cemetery. This scene evokes pride and honor in the funeral rites of Kateb Yacine, whose coffin is carried on... Shoulders of men and women together, male and female artists, and the scene of the religious establishment's misery when it rejected and denounced the figure of Kateb Yacine.

This possible awareness, observed in the narrative scenes throughout the imagined narrative space of the creative self, inspired by its collective consciousness belonging to a society composed of individuals who have become alienated from their homeland and saturated with a thought different from that of Algerian society, has contributed to several social transformations, including the realistic scene of the disintegration of social institutions and the aversion to them. In a television interview, the writer Ahlam Mosteghanemi, who represents the creative self, was asked whether her novels had contributed to the spread of spinsterhood due to the ideas contained in her novels.

Her response was another question: What about men remaining unmarried and their reluctance to marry? Is it my texts that led to this, or is it the authoritarian institutions that did not provide them with decent living conditions that would encourage them to contribute to building a solid marital institution?²⁹ This question, posed while evading the interviewer's direct question, will be addressed through the novel's text and the current societal reality resulting from the widespread consumption of the novel "Bed Hopper." While the novelist's assertion regarding the shortcomings of the authoritarian institutions in providing a decent life for men may be valid, it is not the sole justification. As is well known, individuals within society possess instinctive material and moral needs, leading them to seek solutions to satisfy these needs. This can be achieved either by undermining the foundations of societal institutions or by creating new avenues and methods through the development of a new collective consciousness that contributes to building individual and collective economic awareness, thus ensuring a decent life and preserving societal institutions. Alternatively, it can involve undermining the foundations of these institutions and satisfying needs outside the institutional framework, whether religious, marital, or familial. Therefore, we find that the potential awareness conveyed by the novel "Bed Hopper," despite its aspiration for a better life for women, does not foster a worldview that is equitable between the two halves of society—men and women—in guiding collective consciousness toward collaboratively building a better life within a framework of preservation. It undermines the institutional gains of society, even dismantling them by neglecting the other half of society: men.

Conclusion:

The novel "Bed Hopper" is a masterpiece of fiction by all poetic, narrative, and aesthetic standards. Its completeness has made it one of the finest contemporary novels, deservedly achieving international acclaim. It carries within its folds several visions of the world, expressing an existing consciousness that seeks a possible consciousness. This study

²⁹ See: Interview with writer Ahlam Mosteghanemi on France 24, November 2017
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n0vz4cgy_c4&t=406s

concludes by examining some excerpts from the novel to observe some of these through the application of the structural-formative method, which has proven its effectiveness in this regard. The most important findings are listed below:

- ✓ The structural-formative approach addresses the shortcomings of the structuralist approach in considering the extent to which a literary text is influenced by and influences its surrounding social and intellectual contexts.
- ✓ The novelistic text carries a potential consciousness and aspires to a potential consciousness, utilizing all textual structures to convey and attempt to construct it.
- ✓ The creative self in the novel "Bed Hopper" is imbued with a mind open to external worlds, accepting the other regardless of their affiliations, and often adopting their positions and principles.
- ✓ "Bed Hopper" defends the author's vision of the world, formed through its belonging to a community of selves that represent it.
- ✓ "Bed Hopper" is a novel laden with symbolic weight, through which it expresses an existing consciousness in Algerian society, represented by the conflict between the Algerian self within and the alienated other, as well as the existing consciousness of male dominance and control over women.
- ✓ As for what surfaced in its textual and poetic language, it contributed to building a possible awareness that was embodied and reflected in the collective consciousness of those consuming its narrative text, as represented in the novel "A Bed Hopper." This possible awareness manifested itself in the disintegration of values—the values of the social institutions that constitute Algerian society.

In conclusion, this study only touched upon a small part of the narrative spaces of "A Bed Hopper" and could not encompass all its aspects concerning its structural composition. It is a boundless ocean, given its immersion in poetic language, the splendor of its narrative style, and the suspense of its plot. It carries many historical and social values and requires, rather than just a single study, in-depth research in this regard.