

Since 1971 battles started to follow one another: first, the Kurdish war against the political regime in Iraq, then the suspicious agreements, the Iran-Iraq war which lasted for eight years, and the second Gulf war which followed it after a one-year break in 1989. The economic siege was the worst of them, as we were periodically under the weight of American missiles. It was interjected by multiple internal wars during the uprisings. The several internal wars between the Kurdish parties which lasted until the fall of the regime led the country to a fierce battle with the world. The American game started; it pushed the new government into a sectarian and ethnic conflict. The outcome was a fierce civil war where thousands of innocent people were killed simply because they belonged to a certain sect, and not for any other reason.

In 2003, the decision came to work on a new war zone. It was the second dark period which may be considered to be the worst in the history of the region: it was the war of the religious creed, where the world and the neighboring countries had played a major role in facilitating, for forty-five years, the “War of Brothers”. Mothers waited for the box carrying the body of their sons as a bitter surprise gifted in the name of homeland and religion. A box carrying the dead body, the medals, the memories, and more importantly, the legacy and the torture endured by the family after this departure. During this war of forty-five years, I did not die but I witnessed how they died. The military color – its masculine memory where national and religious flags were evidence of these tombstone – became part of the country's heritage.

The main painting displayed in *Fatherland* opens up to a scene of empty plates during lunchtime. The scattered bodies of soldiers surrounded by these plates is nothing but a metaphor for Leonardo da Vinci's painting, *The Last Supper*, the topic of which was initially mentioned in the heavenly religions, but which later demonstrated a link between the artwork and the battles fought in the name of religious ideologies. The wars in the region are described as purely religious and sectarian ones. This was the driving force behind my work of art titled *The Last Meal* (or, *Death vis-à-vis Food*). It was, for me, a symbol of the willingness to die for a meal. It depicts, above all, a collection of nightmares and painful scenes which I have been experiencing, having lived for forty-five years of my life in a region where wars have been interminable.

Compositionally, the painting is made up of bodies that are geometrically distributed and intertwined like a fabric and made to resemble a patchwork of military uniform, and sometimes the work gives an impression of silkworms in a green field producing silk for its masters. There is a semi-relative light source that

forces the viewer to depart from the unconscious status towards scattered masses through a precise visual technique that equals all the forms and imitates a woven carpet in two colors green and brown. The color of the faces is closer to the color of the earth, which may betray the eye of the viewer at first glance – that the work of art might be an abstract one. The position of these lying bodies is the only solution to embodiment in its right proportions. The work is painted from an aerial view without any perspectival distortions, wherein a mass of bodies is represented as embracing one another in equal dimensions. The individual figures are not subjected to the laws of perspective. It is a shocking and dramatic scene which at once appears to be made of bodies as well as a worn-out carpet of textures and colors.