Loss of Identity in Postwar Society: An Analytical Study of 'Frankenstein in Baghdad' by Ahmed Saadawi

Assistant lecturer Mohanad Abdulkadhim Hlail
The General Directorate of Education in Thi-Qar, Ministry of Education, Iraq
mohanad.hlail@utq.edu.iq

Abstract in English

This paper explores the loss of the human identity in wartime , focusing on the work of Ahmed Saadawi 's Frankenstein in Baghdad , a Booker Prize nominated . It shows how man might escape his reality to create an imaginary or fictional character,seeking an identity to compensate for the lost one . How war tears people's identities asunder ,leaving behinde fragmentary selves, uncertain and confused memories, and a world steeped in ambiguity – as a result of the violence and destruction of the monstrous present. The transformation of an abandoned corpse into a monster reveals the horrors and traumatizing traces of war. Meanwhile, the creation of this monster also conveys a marginalized voice against those who have no responsibility.The hybrid monster (Whatsitsname) was used by Sadaawi as a national symbol of Iraqi identity after 2003 . Using a postcolonial critical approach,the study argues that Saadawi's exploitation of the magic realism technique is not merely to present that horrible atmosphere of post-war iraq , but to critique the breakdown of social cohesion as well as the disintegration individual identity . The major focus of this paper is Saadawi's ability to mirror the history of Iraq and Baghdad as textual representations and tragic depths that greatly affect culture and identity .

Paper Info

Keywords

1.Introduction

Translating Mary Shelley's Frankenstein from the Romantic Period to a post-war iraqi context, *Franekstein in Baghdad* introduces Whatsitsname ,a body sewn together from severed stranger body parts, come to life with a resistance against the living. Saadawi's appropriation of Shelley's myth explores the oneness of the infinite: the infinite becomes the world through innumerable parting away points, yet these points remain shackled. New creations come into being with new properties, yet are also imprisoned for the old ones. Similarly, excluded from the sacred, infinite being eternally disintegrates into introverted absurdities and devaluation of values for centuries to come. Saadawi clearly voices devaluation in the fate of whatsitsname , the presumed resent-initiating, and asks a series of provocative questions about being and destruction .

Even the transcending shapes of approaching despair are reminiscent of humanity's initial quarrel with the cosmos. The answer to Baal's intervention

remains a riddle. However, even in devaluation, ingratitude and wrath are acknowledged. What the myth must discuss further, then, is the meaning attributed to other beings. Humans would be self-destructive beings without meta-narrative values, yet neither these nor an aesthetic answer to regard everything as transitory and unresolved creatively seem recoverable amid the ruin. The risk of appropriation as an alternate chance of extension is also considered. Discussing the limits of listening in 'Frankenstein in Baghdad, Saadawi clearly acknowledges devaluation and an impasse and disallows any restorative escapism based on hope.

2. Historical Context

The novel "Frankenstein in Baghdad" was created in a specific time and place, raised in a war-torn city filled with various scenes of destruction and dismemberment. The text reflects the writer's view of the Shia-Sunni conflict, the war, the threats, the horrifying scenes, and the sense of abandonment due to being occupied. This inhumane scene, however, generates a new person . Pictures and words resulting from loss lead to Shia payback and revenge and picture the task of the hero – the warmongering journalist. He is in search of a maid, a professional killer.

Evil is in turn against evil. Evil disguised in native clothes and articular shall emulate the same. In brief, this is the text and its view of war, including a literary ending. The late 2005 was two year after the American invasion of Iraq and the beginning of employment and war. Three files are produced – slaughtered bodies that are absorbed without action, the common fear and sadness that compel synthesis, and the profound comment of 'there must be other criteria to create a creature' (Mahmood, 2021).

2.1. Impact of War on Society

War is a traveling cloud hung over humanity. Men killing men in contemporary society is presumably a legitimate activity, while in the sacred world of nature even snake eating the other is a shameful action. Since its invention wars have been obliterating the features of men and framing them with blind dogmas . This kind of blindness is clearly introduces in the novel '' he is going to enforce divine justice "(Saadawi 2013\ 2018 , p174) . Moreover, this dogmatism is commonly extended to legal justification and in most cases shred into more than one thousand rational reasons. Or, war can be looked at from a different angle, war is a mean to obliterate identity. This target could be achieved by the mockery of men's dignity as the crown of creation, creation's best ally. This mockery is exhibited through looting their minds not by bareness, but by transforming dogmatic chaos into blindness and rational, medical pursuits to endless bleariness. And this transformation is quite close to the concept of identity sake. Dictators transform identity chaos into bestowed blindness while crudifying the inner blindness of societies into unsophisticated outward behaviours.

Identity means a soul defined though traces, frame time and size. Four features shape what a person is, a mixture of heart, thoughts, psyche, and flesh; and shape what an animal is, a discrimination by brain's acceptance of fear and mere copying. A character displayed by thought lied in the depth of the heart and a character devoid of trace in the chaos of the psyche must be coarse savagery or grotesqueness, or dismembered vitality without any vitality: it can take the acid of

drugs, blood of butchered flesh, and essences of camphor and be set heap upon heap dead dumping sigils of diseases, but still do not smell the specks of origin (Habeeb,2015). These behaviors mean men's abandonment of identity, decadence of soul purity, and monstrosity in both heart and looks. The grotesquery is polar purity which functions like vhaana intensively; men have been mangled into oblivion. The death shivers turn to waving laughing; yearning with nostalgia are transformed into dust of distant echo of dead songs by ridicule.

3.1. Identity in Crisis

Throughout Saadawi's novel, *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, the absence of a national identity among the people forced to share the territory, the consequences of an identity crisis along the lines of faith and religion; the pursuit of a personal identity along intimate lines; and the consequent emergence of a public consciousness, embraced by the burgeoning mass media, have been pointed out through the positions taken by the characters presented in the novel. The characters' thoughts on national identity and the experience of the war should be the starting point for the discussion of their existential anguish after the loss of their national identity. Ahmed Saadawi has presented together identities constructed on the basis of blood and ideology, which do not open horizons, similar to the impenetrable sun of the desert (Mahmood,2021).

"Solace" and "bigger misery" are the bitter consequences of this mania. The eternal enslavement of the people is the end result. Therefore, religion, like national identity, is revealed to be the birthmark of illusions embossed on hard flesh. The accused, erstwhile patron of the world's tormentors, acquires a significant stature that eventually engulfs them (Abu Baker,2010). This plays a significant role in the process of collecting the fragmented selves, which initially became scattered with the state's collapse. Following the loss of the additional forms upheld for the sake of social review, the public consciousness with its informational arms becomes dominant: the film, the Islamic State, the media; and in parallel with this, the emergence of consciousness of self-safety, which is brought about by the latter's control over the latest methods of war development, keeping pace in imperial power ticking.

3.2. Fragmentation of Self

The notion of self is the basic theme of identity theory in post-war. Identity is the essence of humanity; hence, every human loves identity and struggles for its integrity. The opposite side of identity is fragmentation and conversion. In other words, the breaking up of identity leads to anguish. When the self is distorted or fragmented by some bomb or force, its main constituents of it, such as memory, place, and language, will have a fear of loss and will rebel against losing identity. *Hadi al-Attaghi* is the junk dealer whose job is to collect and recycle the wrecks of the war. After he visits the explosion site of the truck bomb on al-Mutanabi street, he discovers some separated body parts. He thinks that they belong to one person, and when one of them shows signs of life, he decides to collect some parts from other corpses in order to make the body whole again. "I made it complete so it wouldn't be treated as rubbish , so it would be respected like other dead people and given a proper burial ."(Saadawi 2013\2018 p 27 chap 2) Thus, he connects the parts with respect to one of the Qur'anic verses about the resurrection of human beings on the Day of Judgment, which says that God will gather each one

of them with what they were created from . This means that Hadi will resurrect the dead with dead body parts. Almost all the corpses' places, religions, and nationalities are heterogeneous and, hence, constitute a grotesque and apply lots of fears against loss of identity in itself (henceforth, it will be called monster). The fear operates as the limit of monstrosity and develops excessive assaults on the other as a distorted form whose assault is beyond redrawing boundaries, that is, fledging from the monster in what form(s) and how much violence. As a fragment, it is fearful and against being forgotten.

3.3. Collective Memory and Trauma

The sheer number of individuals displaced by the United States' 2003 invasion of Iraq, due to death, destruction, and the onset of sectarian violence, is overwhelming. In its aftermath, Iraq and the images associated with it have become a global zone of trauma and horror. Location, wound, calamity, and trauma are irreversibly preserved through images projected on television screens that permeate both the private and public domains of life in the wake of the media coverage of the invasion and the ensuing violence. Exile or geographical separation in postwar society entails a reconstruction of identity. Unmoored from their places, Iraqis become a symbol or sign, reconstructing place as a phantom through memories that do not belong to them. The loss of the sense of place leads to the loss of the collective.Each individual's loss is refracted endlessly. Location, displacement, disaster, and terror perpetually reopen wounds, composing a narrative of trauma whose chaotic nature cannot be redeemed by archival memory.

Trauma prevents the articulation of its occurrence. It incapacitates victims and functions as the cause for unutterability. Deserted by morals and faith after the civil war, survivors become the haunted, dream-free souls of horror, agony, and anxiety. Memory becomes a dangerous disease. Memory, because of fear, is ghostly. Because of hiding, it is a void.

Loss of identity signifies loss of memory. Memory then situates Iraqis in ambiguous hauntingness. In this sense, trauma systematizes society as invisible by-products of international politics. Displaced individuals re-experience and revisit irrational fears, submerged whereabouts that succumb to oblivion. Stray in place and empty in space, their identities disappear into ambiguity. Shared grievances unify them and transform their shared provenances into a monstrous absent other. Fragmented memories evade congruency. Through the ghostly hauntings of their traumas, they become a mass unable to constitute cohesive imaginations or enact corporeal functions other than an eternal spiraling and stagnation in their phantoms, as suggested in the narrative form that wails where then shall we go? (Habeeb,2015).

4. The Monster as a Reflection of Society

Saadawi's monster serves as a partner in crime to the monstrous society of post-Saddam Iraq. Just as Victor Frankenstein believes the grand scheme of acquiring immortality could justify the monstrous creature, society at large convinces itself that war and violence, no matter how horrific, could guarantee safety and peace. The novel explores a world where loss presses down on the living through the eerily lifelike creature stitched from both the deceased and the living, a narrative

able to question the meaning of life and humanity without further eliciting trauma (Mahmood,2021).

Ahmed Saadawi's original adaptation of Shelly's "Frankenstein" offers the reader an interesting narrative borne of creativity, filled with complex characters. On that note, the novel's metaphoric level is undoubtedly rich, spanning a multitude of concepts. The garbage monster, its material origin notwithstanding, can be seen as a critique of the state of Baghdad, constituting a reclamation of an already lost identity in postwar society . The monster's construction is borne of "garbage," which is not merely the former materials of loved bodies and souls, but also the national memories of the inhabitants alongside their cultural, historical, and cosmological dignity. The breaker of national pride, represented by a foreign junk dealer engaged in national looting, Kadhim's attempts to hoodwink the hapless truck driver and sell the Baghdad Tigris, the frequent recounting of the looting of the National Museum, and Bu Nassif's attempt to breach the sanctum of the tarab shrine are macroscopic references to the fragmentation of an already lost identity, forced upon the birthday city of the Garbage Man (Mahmood,2021). Saadawi recognizes that there is no longer a singular consciousness of identity, but rather a diversity of interpretations within the ambiguous conditions of present-day Iraq.

Within the monster's many layers, the grotesque was the most dominant worldwide and throughout the fragmented city of Baghdad. Its existence clothed in the thrown-away garb of many noble bodies turns trash into treasure and, in a single stroke, reveals the intertwined fate of many. Plastic bones juxtaposed with human and sheep parts obscure the distinctions among different elevations of existence. The sounds reverberating merely through rubbish are artfully penetrative, insisting anonymity in the many expressions of hatred toward the shared monsters. Overall, Ahmed Saadawi's adaptation of Shelly's Frankenstein is relatively faithful, with Suha and the doctor intrinsically connected to Frankenstein and Waltham. Saadawi does add a few original minutes, conferring brio and distant horror to the original narration. The frivolity, the monster's attempts to persuade the city to adopt the garb of exile, the cacophony of user-games ridiculing the grotesque, and the absurd weapons of total destruction contrast with the solemnity and despondence of the imagined urban scene near the end.

5. Death as a pivotal theme in Frankenstein in Baghdad

Death has an essential role as a horrific idea for the gothic novelist along the time, and Ahmed Saadawi is not an exception for his ancestors; death is employed as a dynamic factor and a magic cane in the hand of the writers to escape the traumatic reality in order achieve some supernatural deeds in a realistic frame.

Furthermore, death is not the end of evil but a starting point to instigate the individual's imaginative sense. According to Gilbert(2011) "death has a psychological indication and she differentiates two types of death " the corporeal death" which starts with the formal declaration of the community that person is dead, whereas "the symbolic or subjective death" which might precede or follow. The first one refers to the man's experiences individually or collectively" (p.6).

Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad* intricately employed the notions of dead through Whatsitsname – the main character – in the novel; he passed through the bodily death of many victims of the violence and war to be unified in a hybrid body .the challenge of the reason and rationality is reinforced by the gothic mode to proceed forth. The character of Daniel's mother – the old disillusioned woman – represents the symbolic death for the community for two reasons: her odd act and behavior waiting for her war missing son that pushes her neighbors to address her as a madwoman, she is subjectively dead. The second one is her loneliness in an old house that turned out to be like a grave for her lovely past.

The Whatsitsname experiences a kind of death that is well described by Fairfield (2001) as the ''anthropological death'' by which a person loses his identity and separated from his community(p.64), the character of the security guard is transferred into metamorphosis isolated from his family, seeking supernaturally revenge and justice. There is definitely an ambivalence concerns the rational meaning of death that Botting (2005) puts in"death denies any possibility of imaginative transcendence into an awesome and definite space .''Botting also adds that '' it is the moment of the negative sublime, a moment of freezing There is no complete alienation from the finite world (p.p49-52). However, Saadawi eschews the reality to create a gothic world for his character which acts as a connection between the real world and the deads " There in the valley of peace in Najaf, he examined all the graves. He didn't find anything that offered him any certainty, but in the end, he saw a teenager in a red t-shirt, with silver bangles on his wrists and a necklace of black fabric he was sitting cross-legged on a raised grave." (Saadawi, 2018, p.38).

Death is one of the terrifying ideas in addition to the pain and danger, that can be regarded as a sublime which according to Heiland (2004) " sublime experience is at the heart of the gothic " because it transcends the experience of reality to escape the spatial and temporal limits of the ordinary physical world. (p.33). For this reason, sadawi asserts in FIB the superiority of the spirit over the physical mortal bodies and this well indicated by the spectrum with two sliver bracelet in the cemetery: "this is my grave. My body's lying beneath. In a few days, I won't be able to get out like this. My body's decomposing and I'll be imprisoned in the grave till the end of the time ." (Saadawi, 1918, p.33).

The meaning of death has a lured role in the gothic novel permits the transgression to give a new impressive dimension for the novelist to capture the reader's mind. As a result, an imaginative world is created definitely in the readers 'mind to accept new ideas.

9. Philosophical Implications

Frankenstein in Baghdad is set in the aftermath of the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, at a time when Baghdad is marked by security breakdown, sectarian struggles, and widespread violence. The heart of the narrative is the conflict between the titular creature and its creator; Hadi, requested by a former colleague, collects body parts and assembles them into a creature who roams the streets to avenge its creator's death. This monster, however, wreaks havoc in

Baghdad, brutally killing civilians. In attempting to destroy it, the neglected and desperate security forces in a fragmented state apparatus accuse each other of duplicity while inflaming the sectarian conflict in society. Saadawi adopts a number of literary techniques to address existential issues regarding place, identity, distance, and surveillance that arise from the war in modernity. Then, words are no longer a necessary condition for meaning or impact, and the scenes are not located in real places as anthropological photographs, and Satanic monsters do not wear human skins. Only mad, vicious crusaders can cease the bloodbath, even in the absence of justification, audience, or sight. Nothing can be numeric, continuous, or whole. The decapitated introduction put the book's title in fright, throwing it into generations of profane prodigies. The labor of word weaving is regarded as cruelty, and description and prediction have proved useless. In this novel, the monster turns people to be destroyed before they are created in the face of missing absence, nodding towards Picasso and structure.

Saadawi takes the words as a phantom hammer stimulating the fickle imagination of distorted puppets in the dust of gods . Saadawi inventively articulates the theory of a palimpsest of monsters and senselessness and questions the place for humanity and the use of language in presenting 'humanity' to a premature non-existent monster. This does not mean that things, places, and words have lost entirely their meanings or could find none at all. Rather, with the fixity and solidity of the modernist systems of abstract movements either in spatiotemporal distance to dehumanize atrocity or in the higher places to recline the fray in search of a reasonable explanation, everything continues but in a destabilized consciousness of absence and nonsense (Mahmood, 2021).

9.1. Existentialism in Postwar Context

Existentialism presents a broad philosophical thought regarding existence, man, and the universe. It is characterized by the belief that existence precedes essence and that one needs to create one's essence through actions in a world that is indifferent and absurd in relation to the individual's goals, which implies the freedom and responsibility to make choices for oneself. Existentialists believe in the primacy of individual experience, which means that one knows the world through first-person account, rather than through history books or scientific theories, to such an extent that the human being is a conscious being, alone in a body, thrown in an alien universe and in perpetual angst .The content of a literary work is not categorized as belonging to a specific genre of art. In contrast in the structure of a text any literary form can hold a specific content, it subjects itself to a specific genre. Ahmed Saadawi's *'Frankenstein in Baghdad'* might be categorized as postcolonial text in terms of its content. However, in its form, it disregards being a postcolonial text and rather shifts toward embracing an existentialist thought.

'Frankenstein in Baghdad' corresponds to the political and historical aftermath of the US invasion of Baghdad in 2003 and highlights issues related to the destruction of individual identity in war-posed societal situations. Individuals are classified based on trivial communal standards. The consciousness of the individual becomes a foreign substance and subjected to the anonymity of the collective. As a result of the loss of individual identity and consciousness in postwar society, bitter nihilism arises.

Nihilism manifests itself in the acceptance of whatever fallacy, attitude, or thought; as in the belief in the truth of whatever conspiracy declared on TV. 'Nothing matters' (absolutely no act matters) becomes the operative false belief. Based on that nihilism, an alienation vision is cultivated, as if the body undergoes cerebral anesthesia; one sees but does not believe and does not feel. An interpretation of time and actuality is construed, whereby recurring moment misunderstands time, as all moments coincide in the same moment of destruction. Then, daydreams regarding stability or autonomy operate as a more urgent death, if possible.

9.2. Identity and the Human Condition

In *'Frankenstein in Baghdad,'* Ahmed Saadawi foregrounds the relationship between the individual and the state. Hadi al-Attar is created from a potpourri of human scrap. Frantically seeking to escape chaos, Hadi's peace is rooted in darkness. At their inception, all beings are innocents. The denial of understanding creates fear in spirits. Interactions among creatures lead to perceptions of the self and the other. Innovation creates life. The deaths of objects render them inoperative, and parcellated only to consume the soul in a fluent eternity (Mahmood, 2021).

10. Conclusion

The discussion of identity loss and retrieval in postwar Iraqi society culminates with the conclusion that Iraqi society is in dire need of a narrative that reveals its various identities. The various factions and groups with the same identity have different goals and dreams, but they still suffer because of a distorted identity of a creature within society's shell. To reflect this identity loss in society, various narrative methods are used, including the fragmented story that lacks resolution at the level of the macrostructure or background. The scene remains fractured, and there appears to be extensive diversity in ethnicities, languages, and narratives. Each faction narrates its recollections of what is taking place in Baghdad, and the language succeeds in differentiating between the narrators' accents. Syllables, pronunciations, and vocabularies differ, and there are even changes in the English text. Additionally, there are various ideologies, depending on who is dictating the story and which narrative is being told. The monster works simultaneously in the various places that the narrative circles around. The narrative space remains fluid, delicate, and ambiguous.

As the narrative proceeds, the diversities become so wide that emptiness and a sense of a broken horizon come to contain Baghdad. There are also concerns regarding how to retrieve the identity once it has been lost, which has always been in decline. This was the case with the Iraqi identity, and it is possible for the society that reached that point to dissolve. Despite the long, elaborate, and painful wait, the reparation of the identity did arrive, embodied in the creature produced by the junk dealer. At a macro-level approach, the society bore a monster whose characteristics depend on the fabrications of others. It came from a gathering of parts from diverse different bodies, revealing that diverse characteristics were formed, which joined together for the identity. It is through the intersection of the various social identities that comprise the Iraqi identity that the reparation and collective recognition of the lost identity are revealed and formed. Arabic identity, Western identity, and Turk identity join together to retrieve an identity that

cannot be fixed anymore, but it embraces all of them, inclusive and unpacked. Each identity brings its part and determines the way it fabricates the creature and gives it life.

The monster comes to reveal fragmentation and rupture. The monster's speech reveals illuminated sanity, bringing to the surface the hidden horrors that laid beneath the surface. The creature's actions are not sufficient in order to bridge that ugly gap. With the various forms of breaches and losses exceeding the ability to repair, the narrative reaches the end, reflecting Baghdad's identity in cumulative wounds that never heal, impossible to fix . The failure of reparation is a death blow, which a monster could never cure. Un-identity comes to reveal an infinite emptiness that is signified by a creature whose actions are futile.

References

Abu Baker, M. S. A. (2010). The question of identity in Abdulrahman Munif's *When We Left the Bridge*. *Studies in Literature and Language, 1*(6), 52–61.

Abu Shehab, R. (2022). *Post-colonialism in Ahmed Saadawi's Frankenstein in Baghdad: Textual representations and depths and the aftermath phrasing*.

Botting, F. (1996). *Gothic*. Routledge.

Geary, R. (1992). *The supernatural in gothic fiction: Horror, belief and literary change*. Edwin Mellen Press.

Gilbert, J. (2011). *Living death in medieval French and English literature*. Cambridge University Press.

Heiland, D. (2004). *Gothic and gender*. Blackwell Publishing.

Lanone, C. (2004). *The remains of the Gothic: Persistence as resistance*. Presses Universitaires du Mirail.

Fairfield ,P. (2001) .Death and life . Algora publishing .p.64.

Mahmood, K. A. (2021, June 18). The appropriation of innocence: From Shelley's *Frankenstein* to Ahmed Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad*. *Advances in Women's and Gender Studies, 5*(2). https://doi.org/10.24093/awejtls/vol5no2.10

Qasim Habeeb, Z. (2015). *Writing trauma in Iraq: Literary representations of war and oppression in the fiction of Sinan Antoon* (pp. 11–13) [Master's thesis, Missouri StateUniversity].*MSUGraduateTheses,2559*.
https://bearworks.missouristate.edu/theses/2559

Saadawi, A. (2018). *Frankenstein in Baghdad* (J. Wright, Trans.) [Kindle edition]. Oneworld Publications. (Original work published 2013)

Smith, A. (2007). *Gothic literature*. Edinburgh University Press

---

Abstract in Arabic

تناول هذه الدراسة مسألة فقدان الهوية الإنسانية في زمن الحرب، مع تركيز خاص على رواية أحمد سعداوي فرانكشتاين في بغداد، المرشّحة لجائزة البوكر العالمية. وتُبرز الكيفية التي قد يلجأ فيها الإنسان إلى الهروب من واقعه عبر ابتكار شخصية خيالية أو متخيلة، بحثًا عن هوية بديلة تعوّض الهوية المفقودة. كما تكشف عن تمزق هويات الأفراد تحت وطأة الحرب، وما ينشأ عنها من هويات متشظية، وذكريات مرتبكة وملتبسة، وغموض يلفّ العالم نتيجة العنف والدمار اللذين يميزان الحاضر الكارثي. إنّ تحوّل جثة مهملة إلى كائن وحشي يعبّر عن فظائع الحرب وآثارها الصادمة. وفي الوقت ذاته، فإن خلق هذا الكائن يُجسّد صوتًا مهمشًا يقف في مواجهة قوى لا تتحمل أي مسؤولية مباشرة عمّا يحدث.

وقد وظّف سعداوي شخصية الوحش الهجين (ما اسمه) بوصفها رمزًا وطنيًا للهوية العراقية بعد عام 2003. ومن خلال تبنّي مقاربة نقدية ما بعد استعمارية، تجادل الدراسة بأن استثمار سعداوي لتقنية الواقعية السحرية لا يقتصر على تجسيد ذلك المناخ المروّع، بل يتجاوز ذلك إلى نقد تفكك النسيج الاجتماعي وانهيار البنية الفردية. وينصبّ التركيز الرئيس لهذا البحث على قدرة سعداوي في عكس تاريخ العراق وبغداد، بوصفهما تمثيلات نصية تتسم بعمق مأساوي شديد التأثير في الثقافة والهوية.