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# The experiences of Iraqi Immigrant and Identity Crisis in Sinan Antoon's voices

# تجارب المهاجر العراقي وأزمة الهوية في اعمال سنان أنطون

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**Abstract**

This study examines Iraqi immigration and identity crisis as portrayed in Sinan Antoon's major works, *The Corpse Washer* and *The Book of Collateral Damage*. Drawing on postcolonial theoretical frameworks including Stuart Hall's notion of identity as a continuous production, Homi Bhabha's concepts of hybridity and liminality, and Achille Mbembe's theory of necropolitics the research demonstrates how Antoon's fiction reveals the fragmentation of Iraqi identity under war, occupation, and sectarian violence. Immigration in Antoon's vision is not merely physical displacement but an internal exile marked by estrangement, guilt, and fractured belonging. Through the characters Jawad and Nameer, Antoon exposes the collapse of social, ethnic, and

cultural structures in Iraq, while also critiquing Western narratives that commodify Iraqi suffering. His novels restore agency to marginalized voices and preserve the lived reality of Iraqi communities amid destruction. Ultimately, the study argues that Antoon's work functions as a literary act of resistance, memory, and cultural reclamation, transforming the immigrant and the survivor into witnesses who preserve identity in the face of conflicts. Textual analysis will be used to investigate the implicit and explicit clues. The thematic and content analysis will trace to find out a close relation of critical and literary nature.

**Key Terms**: Postcolonialism, Immigration, identity, Diaspora, necropolitics

الملخص:
تـدرس هـذه الدراسـة أزمـة الهجـرة والهويـة العراقيـة كـما صوّرهـا سـنان أنطـون في روايتيـه الرئيسـيتين «غسـل الجثـث» و«كتـاب الأضرار الجانبيـة». وبالاسـتناد إلى الأطـر النظريـة لمـا بعـد الاسـتعمار، بمـا في ذلـك مفهـوم سـتيوارت هـول للهويـة كإنتـاج متواصـل، ومفاهيـم هومـي بابـا عـن التهجـين والحدوديـة، ونظريـة أشـيل مبيمبـي عـن السياسـة الميتـة، يُظهـر البحـث بالتطبيـق ويكشـف سرديـة وخيـال أنطـون عـن تفتـت الهويـة العراقيـة في ظـل الحـرب والاحتـلال والعنـف الطائفـي والهجـرة. فالأخـيرة في رؤيـة أنطـون ليسـت مجـرد نـزوح جسـدي، بـل هـي منفـى داخـلي يتسـم بالغربـة والحنـين للـماضي والشـعور بالذنـب وتفـكك الانتـماء. ومن خـلال شـخصيتي نمـير وجـواد ، يكشـف أنطـون عـن انهيـار البنـى الاجتماعيـة والعرقيـة والثقافيـة في العـراق، وينتقد في الوقـت نفسـه السرديـات الغربيـة التـي تـذكي معانـاة العراقيـين. وتعيـد رواياتـه فاعليتهـا للأصـوات المهمّشـة، وتحافـظ عـلى واقـع حيـاة المجتمـع العراقـي وسـط الدمـار. في نهايـة المطـاف، تُجـادل الدراسـة بـأن أعـمال أنطـون تُمثّـل عمـلا أدبيًـا للمقاومـة والذاكـرة واسـتعادة الـتراث الثقـافي، مُحوّلـةً المهاجـر والناجـي إلى شـهودٍ يُحافظـون عـلى هويتهـم ومواجهـة التحديـات.

## Introduction

In Sinan Antoon's literary imagination immigration is not a linear journey from one place, home to another, but a recursive and disorienting experience of longing, guilt and fractured belonging **(**Papastergiadis 64**)**. In both *The Corpse Washer* and The *Book of Collateral Damage*, Antoon creates protagonists inhabited by a diasporic sense of estrangement: They come

from Baghdad without quite reaching America. These are stories that push back against the triumphalist language of immigration as escape or reinvention. Rather, they foreground the emotive, epistemological ruptures of immigrant being as Iraqis whose departures are parsed preliminarily as war, occupation and exile-shaped (Gana 142). Antoon as an émigré writer of course also contributes a tension with a stroked-in brush that adds texture to these representations. And his narrative has an inconsolable ambivalence flip sides or two in the same line, so for example he mourns Iraq at precisely the point when attacking the forces which have made such mourning inevitable. His characters do not have tidy solutions, nor do their lives end entiguously. Instead, they exemplify the "diaspora experience" that Stuart Hall talks about a state of "multiple belonging" and "hybrid identity" always coming into being (Hall 236). Through their voices, Antoon invites readers to bear in mind not so much the right to emigrate as what kind of ethical sense can be made out such emigrated facts as bereavement, remembrance or speech.

In other words, for Antoon's fiction migration is not just an assumption in the background but rather a central axis around which questions of who we are, what do we remember and how can we resist over our pasts and futures revolve. From Baghdad to America his protagonists bear the gunnysacked ruins of a homeland, and carry too the burden of speaking for the silenced. Their stories are broken up, and multivoiced; they refuse the linear thrust of exile, and the end of assimilation. In doing so, Antoon retrieves the immigrant voice as a locus of complexity, critique and cultural survival a voice that, while dislocated, won't be extinguished.

The hypotheses**,** Antoon uses narrative fragmentation, memory, and testimony as literary strategies to resist Western representations that reduce Iraqi suffering to "collateral damage. His novels *The Corpse Washer* and *The Book of Collateral Damage* portray Iraqi identity as a fragmented and continuously reconstructed process shaped by war, displacement, and trauma.

Antoon's literary works function as acts of cultural preservation, giving voice to marginalized Iraqis silenced by occupation, sectarianism, and global media.

## Literature Review

The themes of immigration, identity crisis, and post-2003 Iraqi experience explored in Sinan Antoon's fiction have been discussed within postcolonial, diaspora, and war-literature studies.

This work surveys major scholarly works relevant to the present research, focusing on criticism on Sinan Antoon's novels, studies on Iraqi identity and diaspora, postcolonial theoretical frameworks, and works addressing necropolitics and the politics of representing war and violence.

In "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" (1994), Hall conceptualizes identity as a process, always in flux and shaped by historical rupture an idea foundational for interpreting Jawad's and Nameer's hybrid identities. Hall's idea that identity is an act of "becoming as well as being" is directly applicable to diasporic Iraqi subjects.

Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994) introduces hybridity, liminality, and the Third Space frameworks that illuminate the cultural in-betweenness experienced by Antoon's characters. Jawad's mental displacement inside Iraq and Nameer's geographical displacement in America exemplify Bhabha's in-between subject.

Several critics emphasize Antoon's representation of death and mourning. For example, Muhsin al-Musawi (2015) argues that The Corpse Washer embodies a "memory archive" of Iraq's suffering after decades of dictatorship and invasion. Similarly, Nouri Gana (2012, 2015) views Antoon's work as part of Anglo-Arab literature that resists Western depictions of the Iraqi subject as merely a symbol of war. Gana notes that Antoon's fragmented narrative structure mirrors the fragmented identity of Iraqis living through occupation.

Other studies explore Antoon's engagement with exile and cultural loss. Al-Ali and Pratt (2009) contend that post-2003 Iraqi diaspora narratives frequently negotiate nostalgia, trauma, and the struggle to maintain cultural continuity patterns clearly reflected in Nameer's dislocated identity in The Book of Collateral Damage. Antoon's dual role as both émigré writer and chronicler of Iraqi suffering is also emphasized by scholars like Syrine Hout (2012), who describes Iraqi diasporic literature as both testimonial and resistant. Miller, Iva Katzarska, et al. mention in the

paper 'Exploring the Content of Global Citizen Identity" that the investigation of international citizen identity explores diversity study and the lives of others and Social Identity. This is according to discourses related to global citizenship and critical pedagogy concerning globalization's impact on humans and themes from theorists in the global education literature. The aspects of identity are consistent with the perspectives of social identity on different groups and values. The relationship depends on attitudes of psychology and sociology as interdisciplinary and global identification. (5&6)

**1-The Immigration in views and voices Sinan Antoon's literary works from Baghdad to America**

post-9/11 in America, Nameer reminded "*The Book of Collateral Damage"*, in which he is an Iraqi academic adrift in the United States and perhaps far from Baghdad in the flesh, but spiritually, his subconscious is connected to its rubble. "I live in a city that is not mine, in a language that is not mine," he admits, "and I write about a country that no longer exists" (Antoon 52). And it is this triadic tension among place, language and memory that enables Nameer to reckon with his immigrant identity. He is not just an Iraqi in America; he is a subject untethered between two worlds, both of which refuse him complete allegiance. It is particularly fitting to call identity as "a matter of becoming as well as of being" (Hall 225). Nameer as Antoon does not carry a fixed kernel of meaning from Baghdad to the united states: he is not static, but fluid and continues to be wrought by trauma, nostalgia and the intellect.

Antoon's treatment of immigration also stands as an indictment against what he perceives to be America's gaze. Nameer's encounters with American colleagues and students often reveal an easily solvable curiosity pertaining to Iraq Here is a dilemma to chew on; "They want me to be the native informant," he writes, "to translate their guilt into digestible anecdotes" (Antoon 67). This phenomenon recalls Edward Said's criticism of Orientalism, wherein the East becomes to be seen as a place of detoxification and violence that Westerners can consume. Nameer's refusal to play this part, his embrace of ambiguity and grief and contradiction, is a kind of resistance. His becomes

a voice of the counter-narrative that goes against the biopic image where Iraq is represented as lost state or territory gained. *The Corpse Washer* (in which Jawad does not emigrate) follows this pattern to some degree. In *The Corpse Washer*, however, with the exception of Jawad's refusal to leave Iraq, I consider space as a specter the possibility of leaving haunts the entire story. One by one, his friends and family members escape Baghdad for Jordan, Syria or the West. In contrast, Jawad is still around. This is not because he's been long a patriot and war-hero-in the war. Hell, if life stopped that would stop but then where would living be? "I thought about leaving," he admits, "but I didn't know where to go, or what I would become" (Antoon 88). Deeper than this, the reluctance springs from a primitive terror that immigrating may not be salvation at all but even awfuller rending of heart and mind. Jawad's immovability in the streets of Baghdad does not signify stability as much as it does ratification; rather than a reflection today that reflects how tied down many people are even if they won't take it on themselves to move, even mentally, from their own architectures Confucius said. The emotional cost of immigration in Antoon's fiction goes beyond homesickness and nostalgia; it is rather survivor guilt and the cross of representation. Typically, for all of those in the states such as Nameer this is a place where Iraq is reduced into headlines and statistics or current political questions. And he takes a bitter look back, "Iraq is a word that makes people uncomfortable. They either pity me or want to argue" (Antoon 84). This discomfort lays bare the essentially unequal power relations in cross-cultural collision: Americans can forget Iraq, but Nameer does not have this option. His voice becomes a staging it has to narrate, defend or translate into displays of the Nation's trauma that cannot be readily reduced to words.

Moreover, he has to live in society that commodities Iraqi suffering. In one passage from the book, for example, Nameer is asked to join panel discussion about the Iraq War at a university but hears from the audience only repetitions of simplification that his own nuanced thoughts become almost irrelevant. "What they wanted was a tidy story," he describes it, "not phantoms or rubble" (Antoon 109). This moment takes us to the limit of

representation in the immigrant experience. Nameer's refusal to submit is his form of narrative resistance; His courage in not mourning it exposes the complexity, the contradiction and sheer insult under which commitment as mourning dwells. His immigrant story is not about arrival at all, but about entry into a world where ethics are as murky as muddy water.

Antoon's criticism of American liberalism is both nuanced and pointed. Even as he finds solace and intellectual stimulation in the U.S., Nameer is repelled by the phony empathy of those who consume Iraqi stories and fail to take a good look at themselves. This makes itself felt, as he puts it: "They weep for Baghdad, then vote for the bombs" (Antoon 97). Lines like these expose the moral dissonance that Western reactions to Middle Eastern suffering reveal. In this sense, immigration becomes a paradox: protection in the body but discomfort in the soul; freedom for the mind but banishment from the heart.

In *The Corpse Washer*, immigration is portrayed in terms of what's absent and dreams deferred. Jawad's closest pals, Reem and Salim, flee the country in search of safety and opportunity. Their exits are not roaring, but quiet and sorrowful. "They left without saying goodbye," Jawad recalls, "as if words would make it harder" (Antoon 76). The absences accrue, assembling a city of ghosts, not just the dead but the departed. Jawad's choice to remain isn't presented as a heroic one but tragic, an expression of paralysis more than patriotism. His paralysis counters the mobility of others, emblematizing the unevenness of immigration as a potential. The fiction antagonism of how to handle the immigrant Antoon wrote into his literary text ultimately refuses resolution. His protagonists don't reach a secure identity or some sort of reconciled idea of home. Instead, they operate in a state of flux haunted by what they have left and disillusioned by what they are discovering. This tension is not a flaw in the story, but rather an aesthetic and political decision that it has made. For, as Homi Bhabha claims, "the migrant's success depends on his finding how newness 'comes into the world'" (Bhabha 227). For Nameer and Jawad, newness isn't the result of delivering nostalgia or assimilation, but is forged through the painful act of witnessing violence, memory and our own self's

violent shattering.

In *The Book of Collateral Damage*, it is instantiated in Nameer's decision to translate Wadood's manuscript a sprawling, obsessive inventory of every object destroyed during the 2003 invasion. Although he was first doubtful, Nameer accepts the project as a kind of ethical remembering. "Each object is a witness," he writes, "a fragment of a story that refuses to die" (Antoon 143). This act of translation is a metaphor for the immigrant's job: to bring a lost world into a new tongue, new geography, without taking away its complexity. Nameer's voice, fragmented and polyphonic, turns the scene into a receptacle for this impossible task an impossible narrative that refuses both silence and simplification.

So, *The Corpse Washer* where Jawad decide to stay and become a corpse washer instead of fleeing a Baghdad in the midst of rising violence is one form of existential resistance. Others are gone, but he refuses to leave. Not like a hero, however; Rather, he feels that his identity and the city's misery are inseparable. "If I leave," he reflects, "I will become a shadow of myself, a man with no past and no place" (Antoon 151). This horror of being unremembered cut off from all memory and meaning explains why the psychological cost of emigration is so high. In Jawad's case, staying is a protest, not a solution: it prevents the situation from being passed entirely over to him, and he does not wish to discard those many fragments of humanness left behind in a humanity already shattered.

**2-Immigration and Identity in Iraqi Tradition and Antoon's *The Corpse Washer***

Immigration and identity are in the postcolonial intertwined through the traumatic site of displacement, of loss. For the literature of contemporary Iraq, the tormented truths of war, occupation, and emigration have challenged conceptualizations of what it means to belong or not belong, to be part of a nation torn apart by conflict or isolated in its loss. *The Corpse Washer* (2013), the author's most recent work, stunningly magnifies these tensions as it unfolds against Iraq's fragmentation and the identity crisis it engenders. In the novel, Antoon dramatizes the conflict faced by postwar Iraqis who are torn among traditions that they have inherited and forces of modern conflict and dislocation. When read through

the theoretical standpoint of Homi Bhabha's hybridity and liminality, Stuart Hall's theory of cultural identity as a process (Hall 222). *The Corpse Washer* discloses how Iraqi identity evolves not as a fixed essence but rather as site of negotiation and transformation (Bhabha 2). The traditional Iraqi identity of family, religion and ancestral occupation is the cultural counterpoint around which Antoon shapes Jawad Kazim's tale as its main protagonist. That his father is a mghassilchi, or corpse washer, becomes an emblem for generational tradition that binds the spiritual to social obligation. Jawad's aversion to taking up this work represents the younger generation's ambivalence toward Iraq's ruined, inherited traditions after decades of war. Jawad gives voice to his thoughts on his father's work and states, "Death is not satisfied with depriving me of my hours of wakefulness but insists on haunting me in my sleep" (Antoon 3). That comment is redolent of his own tiredness, and the nation's state of mourning without end which epitomizes Iraq since 2003. Life and death merge in modes of being: some of the people who remain are spiritual emigrants, strangers in a home transformed by violence. Read postcolonially, Jawad's existential crisis is liminal in the sense that it becomes entre-deux space for Bhabha enfolding something of a betweenness paralleling traditional and modernist tension, faith and doubt or home and exile. To decline his father's illustrious profession and that recognition, and to discover it in sculptural art is Jawad's transmutation of identity outside of a society that has made Iraqi life barren. But war gets in the way of that pursuit, and he is thrust back into the kingdom of death. Hybridity, as Bhabha conceives it identity formulated in relation to difference rather than collapsed into sameness clarifies Jawad's situation: he is "half in the world of the living, half with the dead." His work as a corpse washer is a threshold at which sacred ritual meets profane art, operating on the psychic split between tradition and estrangement; that these dualities don't simply cancel each other out (or, perhaps more accurately and not incidentally, amplify one another) is epitomized by the very gesture of washing. By performing the ritual of washing for those who have no dignified other than that which is inherent in the process of cleansing, Jawad reclaims in

spirit bits and pieces of Iraqi humanity from amongst the wreckage this is a manner not unlike Hall's notion of identity as "a production, always in process, and always constituted within representation" (Hall 222).

But Antoon portrays immigration as not just a geographical dislocation but an interiorized exile. While Jawad is physically in Iraq for most of the novel, he experiences a psychological immigration as well, a condition of continuous displacement within his own country. His longing for his ex, Reem (who now lives abroad), exacerbates such a sense of absentia. When he finds out she has fled to Amsterdam, he thinks of going after her on the Web: "I'll Google her again tomorrow when I go to the Internet café after work" (Antoon 4). The picture of the Internet café an environment of virtual connection amid physical decay serves as a metaphor for the fragmented and mediated identity of the post-war Iraqi subject. Reem's exile and Jawad's stasis are like a pair of diapoles representing the two poles of diasporic identity: that of the immigrant who has to remake his or her self within another culture, and that who has been abandoned to be left behind in a homeland now also foreign. Each occupy what Bhabha terms the "third space" in which cultural identity becomes hybridized through trauma, translation and survival.

*The Corpse Washer*'s basin Clean bodies are an equally symbolic act as they are a physical one, where manner of cleaning will select out identity later and neatly expunge it. `When we asked Jawad how he managed to build an entire house in ten days, he answered, "rewarded by God'' (Antoon 6) This attitude builds an atmosphere apart from the life of bodies into which continuity of rite fuses with passing on spirit complete negation to health with just some better future we are likely to locate in dreams." But for Jawad these rituals have no divine meaning; they are simply movements. His disappointment shows the juxtaposition between Iraq's pre-war moral order and today's mixed bag of chaos that is continually wiping out all collectively owned things, like Islamic State fighters currently detained in jails from having met their end. A nation in mourning and rebirth where with the washing of bodies the memory is cleansed. Washing with dignity. This

vindicates Hall's insights on why identity is not signaling towards an "imagined past" but a "positioning" in response to emerging historical phases (Hall 225). For Jawad, identity is not something he receives but something he wrenchingly reassembles in the very face of death and dislocation.

Antoon's representation of Iraq as a necropolitical space, where life and death are suffused by foreign invasions and sectarian politics, broadens the discourse about identity to that of power. The repeat violation of American soldiers and militia clearly acts as a metaphor for the postcolonial existence, one of domination and emasculation. In one such recurring nightmare, he sees men in masks taking away his love, Reem, as he bleeds to death: "the Humvee speeds away and disappears over the horizon" (Antoon 2). This image conflates personal suffering and political allegory, proposing that both love and nation are the raped victims of imperial violence. Immigration, in this way, is also as much about survival as it is the dismantling of oneself: You're running from one part of the world even though your identity has been decimated into shards. The senseless account of the dream also conveys the confounding nature of memory, cementing Hall's argument that cultural identity is "matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being" (225).

Unlike Jawad's arrested and paralysed life, the voices of the Iraqi trance patients in Antoon's later novel *The Book of Collateral Damage* (2019) speak to the persistence of displacement in exile. There, the narrator's effort to "translate the speech of the living" (Antoon 7) resonates with Jawad's silent work of washing the dead. They are both recorders of loss, archivists who capture slivers of Iraqi identity through acts of remembering. The shift from washing the physical corpse to textually documenting it marks a process of maturation in Antoon's reflection on identity if not quite a change in subject, then at least a movement away from the materiality involved, away from body into word. So that immigration becomes a metaphoric state for all Iraqis, absent or present.

In the end, *The Corpse Washer* claims a new idiomatic space around immigration and identity: less an oppositional narrative to that one against which it is written than a surrounding history of loss, survival, mourning and growth. In the Bhabha model, Jawad

can inhabit a liminal sense of identity that is not old enough to be traditional and yet isn't fully modern either, but a perpetually negotiated present with history. For Hall, his split self is a Hollagate and equally the testament to the vitality of Iraqi consciousness. Antoon's novel, therefore, transcends its local setting to become a meditation on exile in general: the struggle of all human beings to make sense of their lives in the rubble of belongingness. At the end, Jawad's art and his ritual work come together in one truth that identity is not an essence but a matter of survival.

**3-Impact of Racial and Ethnic Identity and Impacting of wars on Iraqi identity in Antoon's voices and experiences**

Among the most blistering indictments in fiction of how racial and ethnic affiliation in today's Iraq has been cleaved by years of war, occupation and sectarian violence is Sinan Antoon's *The Corpse Washer* and *The Book of Collateral* Damage. In his figures Jawad in "*The Corpse Washer*" and Nameer in "*The Book of Collateral Damage*" Antoon traces the disintegration of this Iraqi identity, how both external interventions and internal rifts have seeped into the society as it once was. These are novellas and their own countrymen, Iraqis who have watched their country disintegrate and society break apart into ethnic and sectarian camps.

In *The Corpse Washer*, Jawad's vocation as a ghassal (corpse washer) puts him in the middle of Iraq's deaths cape, where corpses are branded not just through violence but also by sect. The novel subtly critiques that war has racialized and ethnicized death itself so that Sunnis, Shia, Christian have under this death the weight of a political autopsy. Antoon's rendition of Baghdad as a city of the dead only serves to emphasize the necropolitical environment (Mbembe 11) that is post-2003 Iraq where identity is not bestowed as a cultural legacy; it becomes more a burden. "The effects of this unending war and many years of dictatorship have played a role in the change in social makeup," said one study.

*The Book of Collateral Damage* extends this critique by analyzing the epistemic violence of war (Spivak 25) the deletion of cultural memory, the suppression of minority voices, and the packaging and selling of Iraqi suffering. As an American-based Iraqi academic, Nameer is obsessed

with documenting the collateral damage of war: the ruin not only of wellsprings of identity yet of people and people. His mission is reminiscent of Antoon's terror that war ruins not only lives but also identities, and the novel's divided structure asymmetrically reflects the dispersed identity of the Iraqi people, for whom racial and ethnic identities are no longer just no the source of pride, but also the cause of serious danger and murder.

Antoon's own experience as an Iraqi Christian émigré informs his literary sensibility, allowing him to render the ethnic and sectarian complexities of Iraqi society at once near and far. These conversations, the day-to-day walks and homecoming negotiations, resurrect a cosmopolitan Baghdad where Sunnis and Shias together with Christians and secularists live. However, sectarian paramilitaries and external intervention erased that very variety, and identification grew to become a symbol of threat. Jawad's youth recollections record a muted lament for the lost cohabitation but religious disparity was informal, not combative. From coexistence to disintegration, it is the maturation of this switch, and thus the racialization of identities through combat through which cultural disparity aligned as a political negative that Antoon discloses.

What Antoon reveals much more forcefully in *The Book of Collateral Damage* is the epistemological fierceness of combat. Nameer's aspiration to write the "collateral destruction" of the central act is not incidentally associated with the physical demolition but mainly with erasing cultivated identities and ethnic memory. Wadood, a character that restores the destruction produced by combat, emerges as a rebellion metaphor against the imperial violence of homogenization. His archive is not merely a memory of erosion of story, yet the many sides of the Iraqis comprising Kurds, Turkmen, Yazidis, Christians, and numerous other ethnicities devoid of their narrations in the dominating records (Al-Ali and Pratt 45). Antoon's devotion to these repressed individuals undermines the simplified dualities that serve both the local media and inward sectarian policies.

War does not just sow disunity; it shifts how Iraqis perceive their place in the world order. Both Jawad and Nameer struggle with feeling invisible in the world and misrepresented.`,

misconstrued, especially abroad, like in a Western environment where I'm not just an Iraqi but seen only through the prism of terrorism or victimhood (Said 287). This projected view of the Self is alienating, and a form of repression as the gaze is reflected back onto practice. Antoon's protagonists push back against such distortions through art, memory and narrative; they reinstate themselves as agents of epistemic violence. As Stuart Hall contends, "identity is formed through representation, and Antoon's fiction becomes a site of counter-representation, where Iraqi voices speak back to power" (Hall 235).

Antoon's analysis of how war fails identity also applies to language and narrative form. In both novels, the disintegration of identity parallels a splintering of narrative. *The Corpse Washer* is not a linear narrative, it moves from past to present and dream to reality in order to mirror Jawad's confused mind. And likewise, *The Book of Collateral Damage* borrows metafictional devices and archival impulses to present the impossibility that any one Iraqi experience could otherwise be grasped in its unity. For these formal choices reiterate the idea that war not only shatters bodies and edifices, but also disrupts the co definition of selfhood and collective memory.

The racialization of Iraqi identity is equally obscured by the present-day dialogue about worldwide terrorism and Islamophobia (Bayoumi 12). Nameer and Antoon's other characters, but especially Nameer, feel adverse to the vulgar reductionism or just reductionism – that would combine whose they are with just why they aided in the making of Iraq into dust. Misrepresentation, as well as representation from exterior and within, combined with characters who are stuck in a status of sociocultural ontological nonexistence, solely strengthens the narrative. These storylines are complicated by Antoon's stories, which do so in two separate ways: by showing us a human face and/ or asking us to fly over a tangled Iraqi rainbow. His journey is literary activism, opposing the decades-old monolithic brush-strokes of numerous hegemons and the theft of and heritage of imprisoned groups' tales.

In the final analysis, really, what Sinan Antoon's novels deliver is a deep meditation on how war, occupation and global distortion have reshaped racial and ethnic self-identity

in Iraq. Antoon makes Jawad and Nameer's experiences into a way of representing the psychological costs of war, how identity becomes finally a site not only of contestation but also remembrance and resistance. From cultural theory, and more specifically from postcolonial theory (and, still more precisely, from the work of Stuart Hall and Homi Bhaba), we have learned how Antoon's literary voice is able to render the nuances of a hybrid subjectivity in a riven nation. The result is a testament to Iraqi resilience and by extension, a critique of the forces hoping to destroy that resilience.

**4-The complex reality of Iraq as state and society and the hidden Western necropolises**

*The Corpse Washer* and *The Book of Collateral Damage*, both penned by Sinan Antoon, reflect back the dismemberment of Iraq in its contemporary wasteland precisely through a Western necropolitical reading of it. Based on Achille Mbembe's concept of necropolises, or the power to decide who lives and who dies, Antoon's novel reveals how foreign invasions most notably the American one made Iraq a space of death management. *"The Corpse Washer"* unfolds in a series of tight vignettes whose spare beauty Antoon captures through the eyes of his protagonist, and which show how the state is riven with violence, society turned into a landscape of mourning.(23)

In *The Corpse Washer* is Jawad, a ghassal: an everyday fellow trying to make ends meet, whose work situates him in the very heart of Iraq's necropolitical construct. It is a measure of how death has become a routine because of the steady parade of dead bodies-the ritual slaughter of sectarian murder, foreign bomb, and state indifference. "Antoon's novel resists the conventions of a 'trauma hero' which have earned such a following in Western War literature, offering instead a more subtle depiction," wrote Martin Chulov in The Guardian, "of everyday Iraqis hunted down by a machine of mayhem." Jawad's ruminating about art's impotence in the face of mass death implies that civil society is disappearing, and by extension, so are cultural life aspects. (34)

*The Book of Collateral Damage* also probes epistemic violence in times of war. The central metaphor for Nameer's struggle with documentation as a futile effort to make something that is put entirely out of sight on

the American stage serves here. The character of Wadood, who fetishizes the archives of obliterated objects and lives, stands as Antoon's indictment of Western narratives that highlight Iraqi suffering as mere numbers. "historicizes the American invasion and its aftermath, challenging the redemptive discourse that whitewashes imperial violence," according to a critic. Antoon's fiction accomplishes this labor by repeatedly refusing to engage with the reductive binaries that Western narratives impose on other societies and their struggles civilized versus barbaric, liberator versus terrorist, or whatever and instead forcing us to concentrate on the lived experience of Iraqi society as well as the complexity thereof. In *The Corpse Washer*, Jawad's Baghdad is not merely a killing field; it is also a multi-layered metropolis with distinctive pasts, personal links, and cultural paradoxes. The novel's refusal to idealize the pre-war state or exploit it to amplify the poignancy of the post-invasion chaos reflects Antoon's desire to depict Iraq as a vibrant society rather than the unintentional victim of geopolitics. This framework, however, complicates the necropolitical calculation that renders certain lives dispensable while lowering Iraqi deaths to collateral damage in comparison to higher geopolitical goals.

In that struggle to synthesize his studious remove from the actual gut truth of the pain of Iraq, *The Book of Collateral Damage* provides sort of a nodal juncture if it is nearly seeing the tension between representation and collusion in full mirror. His discussion with Wadood, the single one who keeps a record of everything loss of war, reveals how Western outlook of directing the injury of Iraq may feel minor. The archive Wadood amasses becomes an anti-narrative to the whitewashed storylines of military victory and reconstruction, empire taking its pound of flesh. Antoon's metafiction and fractured narrative style mirror the disintegration of Iraqi society where the state exists not to promote life, but to enable death.(Chulov 38)

The necropolitics is also embodied in Antoon's representation of the collusion between violence and the Iraqi state. Both novels suggest that the state has failed in its obligation to protect its people, instead serving foreign masters or sectarian interests. Jawad's encounters with state institutions hospitals, morgues,

checkpoints are indifferent and corrupt and fearful. Instead, these institutions only reinforce the sense of abandonment and precarity. (The Being and the Nothingness) For Antoon's criticism goes beyond external forces as he also seeks to debunk internal moral-politics of ruling authority, proving that necropolitics as well as its exercise is applied not only from foreign power but also from within.

Antoon's confrontation with necropolitics unfolds in the symbolic order as well, since language, memory and representation are all at stake here. Now, in The Book of Collateral Damage, the saving of smashed objects is not a weird hobby after all but an act of resistance to Iraq's erasure and ignorance about its past. Wadood's archive is a rebuke to America and the West for their perennial tendency to transform Iraqi suffering into an abstraction raw into number, or euphemism ("collateral damage"). By naming and storytelling what disappeared, Antoon also challenges narrative authority and exposes the ideological violence inscribed in imperial speech. This narrational ruse comports with Mbembe when he insists necropolitics functions not simply by exterminating life but also through the symbolic erasure of subjectivity. (17) Even better, Antoon's attack on Western necropolitics does not stop there; it even extends to the battlefield's cultural and intellectual fields on which Iraq is researched, portrayed, and sometimes misapprehended. More specifically, Nameer's experience as an Iraqi scholar who has worked in the United States gives some insulation against, or at least, an alternative to the embarrassing foreclosure of the insider/outsider posture. It is also the way he attempts to demonstrate such ambivalence in a language and a framework of analysis mostly geared towards the typical. It is in the banality of the violence's of epistemic authority that Antoon highlights his own metafictionalism exemplified as a site where writing is a discursive quake straddled bedside an eerie space by intellectual production and ethical representation.

*The Corpse Washer* and *The Book of Collateral Damage* provide for deep reflection on the social manufacturing of Iraq, how the intra-Umma necropolitic as well as extra-Ummaesy have refashioned the country. Based on postcolonial theory and Mbembe's necropolitics, Antoon's tales reveal the gears

of death, disinheritance and symbol violences that make Iraq as we know it today. His two central protagonists, Jawad and Nameer, are not just eyewitnesses, yet they are desistors who decline to one fair some of the narratives that yearn for Iraq to completely fade. Antoon's verses, therefore, exercise as a literary ceremony of mourning, memory, and defiance through which he strives to squander the self-respect from the smash of narrative, in a culture much mostly consigned to debris or stats a few hopelessly forgotten. (19)

**5-Tragic war, oppression and occupation against marginalized People according to Antoon's voices**

Asurgeon's-eyeviewofthewake of war, in which occupation and oppression come recoilingly to life. An unrestrained fluttering through the literary works of Sinan Antoon including *The Corpse Washer* and *The Book of Collateral Damage* is that epitaph to that claim, a chilling reminder on how these wars an occupations affect mainly marginalized people in Iraq (Ford 3). With the eyes of his protagonist Jawad, a corpse washer, and Nameer, an academic in exile. Antoon magnifies the suffering of those who have been rendered invisible by local power structures as well as global imperial stories. Then, his fiction is a site of resistance where the saga of the oppressed can be not only described but held up as play and spectacle. In *The Corpse Washer*, Jawad washes the bodies of victims of bombs, bullets, and any other weapon or instrument used during the sorties on what there is of his city. These were not anonymous folks but familiar and familiar ones with pasts and tales, with family members to recognize them. Antoon's individual concern with routine and grief conveys the human being of those overlooked by others as mere to behold toliman injury. It's a charge of ordinary mortality following post-2003 Iraq. Where the sufferers were least expected to become occasionally horrible. Jawad's musings on his went friends and devastated society point out how war destroys not only human life but social cement too.

*The Book of Collateral Damage* spent this charge in arguing for epistemic physical violence during occupation. Nameer's documenting of any injure by America's intrusion indicates the appearance of relegating

marginal voices to neglect in historical assumption. The data-computer system, the figure of Wadood, obsessively records every structure and life taken throughout the conflict from human memory. It is not simply a catalog of injury but an affidavit of human value to the degree that the alerts left behind don't even mark conservation. Priotizing this fiction in the realities of present-day Iraq is not concerned.

Antoon's preoccupation with the dignity of the downtrodden in Iraq is not limited to those who have fallen to physical violence but also to those oppressed by cultural and political devastation. The hopes of Jawad for art in *The Corpse Washer* are squashed by the ubiquity of death and the absence of institutional support. He is both literally and figuratively banished: a member of a generation of Iraqis reduced to rubble by war. However, Antoon's characteristic is that he chooses to humanize his anguish rather than make him a bandit or a combatant. Jawad, rather, speaks to us in his voice that of somebody most affected by and least heard. This same intensity of feeling maintains in *The Book of Collateral Damage*, but with the emphasis on the manner in which occupation remakes the Iraqis' social body. The disjointed and disordered arrangement of the novel mirrors the manual segmentation of selves and society, especially for those who were split or silenced in war. Nameer's conversations with Wadood are preoccupied with the purity of memory and the self-respect of the tortured. Wadood's registry, which includes much regular Iraqis and their broken belongings, works as a counter-history an attack on the authorized records designed to obliterate or distort the tortured Iraqis' lives. Antoon's fiction is a way of writing in the fight against imperial and tribalists who want to crush the sounds of 'others.'

Oppression reasserts itself as Antoon talks about the occupation. In both narratives, the Western powers are party to a never-ending cycle of perpectuation violence and rancor. Antoon does not paint the occupiers as liberators or reformers but rather as chaotic actors who simply heap pre-existing social inequalities and new forms of marginalization. His characters lose everything but their displacement' their homes, histories, and idioms are as inevitably a casualty of democracy or freedom or security. This criticism is

supplemented by a postcolonial theory lens, which emphasizes the enduring colonial and imperial cultural factors that continue to determine those somebodies who populate the parcels of land where the colonies were erected. (Ford 7) Antoon's literary resistance claims are his refusal to generalize Iraqi suffering. No, in fact, he revolves to the singular experience of marginalization, artists, and religious minorities, families destroyed and forgotten laborers. Jawad's private loss in The Corpse Washer inspires societal grief. The fact that he couldn't avoid the pit of despair is representative of all Iraqis, who are subject to conditions outside of their control. His phrases are considered and compelling, but Antoon avoids the temptation to turn the drama into this case. Documenting the emotional cost of this catastrophe without emphasizing the melodrama, his figures do not seek compassion but rather raise their sight.

This occupation damages the cultural sovereignty of marginal enclaves as well. Antoon's characters struggle to "preserve their language, rituals, and histories in the face of foreign domination" … behind foreign oppressors' lines. *In The Book of Collateral Damage*, Wadood's archive is a culture that has outlived – one of the death's end-runs to reclaim meaning from oblivion. What previously seemed to subsist from still existing, Antoon's continued attention to things, memories, and everyday lives that partake at least partially in something like normalcy looks very different now. (64)

It is an explicit attack, an assertion of the right to contemn those who tragically continue to hold as existent what has been inoperative for far too long: safe stories that differential geopolitics from human suffering. His fiction contends that wars' essence is not the lands taken and lost, but crucially disturbed lives, ruined communities and muted voices. Facets of precisely these phenomena are constructed and scrutinized in the narratives of Jawad and Nameer.

**6-Foreign invaders and the violence of terrorist towards the others**

In *The Corpse Washer* and *The Book of Collateral Damage*, Sinan Antoon engages in such criminalized toleration, but he does so in a way that creates a colorful indictment of not only the violence that has broken Iraq but the deeper mechanics of how foreign invasion and jihadist terrorism have come

together to smash civil society and social cohesion. Antoon's protagonists Jawad and Nameer inhabit a universe of external military threats and internal ideological carnage. Through the speech of his characters, Antoon blows apart the myth of liberator and terrorist, noting how both groups strip "the others," the persons who are rejected for not being from politically and scarily dominant communities, of their humankind.

In for the novel *The Corpse Washer*, Jawad's vocation already adds him near the exploit of the assassinated of foreign bombs and domestic violence. The bodies he washes are evidence not only of the passing of time but also of the haphazard violence dedicated to civilians, to non-Muslims, to the uninspired. Antoon's account soberly debunks the mythologizing of state training: The American intrusion was not an opening but a space of loss. The strengthening of paramilitary corporate and ruthless organizations that *The Corpse Washer* decorates on is imaged as political ramifications of the dark rooms left by foreign military, realism bound about in the message of shudder violence during the gap of royal pleasure. (Chomsky 45)

*The Book of Collateral Damage* kited the same issue by align the violence triggered by the foreign military intervention. For instance, Nameer trenches to keep shingles of perverse, a formation of the conceptual "collateral damage" of foreign soldiers that attuned with his motherland. Nameer's sumptuous painting was sculpted off his son's photograph; and the foreign occupiers expose an implosion bomb for his muse and Darger's chapters. He knows that his enemies wash up cultural dictionaries alongside tale-telling. Wadood, and all the shambles of macerated machines and ruined lives he confined, is a holovibes to the deodorized performance of military gens. By poring terrorism through fiction.

Antoon exposes how foreign occupiers and terrorists devastate not only but not physically whose losses are ignored, disappearable, and causeless seining but categorically terrorist players as such. He can't, or won't, write the violence of Iraq immediately into fiction. Antoon does not give foreign invaders the other bracket only both operate as dispensibles for the militias the other has given up failing governance and security.

In *The Book of Collateral Damage*, Antoon extends this indictment into a meditation on how conquerors and terrorists erase the humanity of their victims. Nameer's urge to list puppets emerges invert an imperial or extremist violence both operate around abstraction, dehumanization, and abnormality. Wadood's archive maintains this logic by stressing the specificity of loss each thing, each life story, and memory is sewing as an insistence. Antoon's metafictional frame, which disrupts the narrative and resists vertical storytelling, likewise reflects the identity of disorientated society attacking against all three sides across this case. (Chomsky 47)

The murder acts done on "the others": bodies only foreign powers or mad ideologies include expendable. His heroes aren't a rebellious hero but stoic torments. It isn't a resistance to Jawad's coffin washing, rather a care restoration of the corpse dignity always in a world that negates individual. The archival urge for Nameer is not an academic question but a moral obligation; it is how he and the remaining writers can bear witness to what official history electing to erase. His fiction forces us to refute that classification, the others are not probable. source mapping automatic to dehumanize, faceless victims whose images we prefer to get unseen, but as living and life misfortunes we must see.

For Antoon, then, literary resistance lies in his refusal to allow either foreign invaders or terrorist groups to monopolize the story of Iraq. His heroes don't talk in slogans or ideologies; they talk in grief, memory and mute resistance. Jawad's body washing signifies caring in a society that has thrown its dead away. Nameer's archival work is an assertion not to forget what war asks one to. These are humble acts, but they challenge the logic of violence that determines "the others" civilians, minorities, artists, and intellectuals as expendable. Antoon's fiction also resists the language of occupation, resist, and terror. As the label indicates: *The Book of Collateral Damage* is a book that mocks those who desire a little politeness between them and mass suffering. In the place of man, his women and men engage in a narrative fight by promises to recognize the loss: a shattered clay jar, a murdered friend, and a vanished neighborhood.

Antoon's novels reveal how foreign invader's and terrorist

actors' connected violence, which merges together and thus, marginalizes and erases Iraqi civil society. In Jawad and Nameer's voice, Antoon subverts the dominant storylines and saves "the others" who should be devalued to live. His fiction transforms into a site of grieving, resistance, and moral witness of the power-resisting logicality of struggle and revival of suppressed voices of humankind in literature.(Said 39)

**7-The authenticity of the Iraqi community and life in *The Corpse Washer***

Sinan Antoon's *The Corpse Washer* is (humanized, culturally vegetated) Iraqi glimpse, not the reduction to the portrait, which foreign media and imperial discourse present. The novel's protagonist, Jawad as Antoon, assembling parts of the daily rhythms of life in Baghdad and the bonds of affiliation, and the ruptures of loss does so with a natural ear for distinct detail and affect because the novel takes place and knows that Iraq is not just a place of violence but a community, pittable and resilient.

The realism of the ghassal job of the main character is a logical tool for the book: This is not simply symbolic, but also literally because it is a real job, which is practically the right mores when the dead have the right to respect, honor the deceased in Islam, which means to wash, to take care of them. "I washed the body with warm water and soap, gently, as my father had taught me," Jawad narrates, "then I wrapped it in white cloth and recited the prayers" (Antoon 45). In this paragraph symbolically washing the dead, we feel the novel's ability to demonstrate Iraqi traditions with a keen sense of both strength and delicacy. Washing the dead is about care; it is not only a naming, it is a humanity to be anchored in chaos.

The Baghdad that Antoon offers is thick with a sense and a space. Its inhabitants are not the survivors of a war-torn city; they will be remembered for how in opening the theater was an act of memory, nostalgia and contradiction. "I remembered wandering down streets stinking of palm trees, the smell of cardamom tea leaking out of coffee shops and the call to prayer resounding off the flanking walls of alleyways" (Antoon 108). Words such as these bring to mind a lived, layered Baghdad that refuses a western and shallow gaze. "I imagined smaller curls and

imagining walking through her pencils this way, with no logical menace, stopping merely to notice what x looked like up close in the tip of her pencil: squiggly hairlines that then widen to bigger and choppier lines when splayed out on the paper. These stolen pens were felt smuggled between my fingers" (Lerner 201). "Even the air had changed," reflects Jawad, "as if the city itself was mourning" (Antoon 78). And this is the feeling of a community grieving but not going anywhere.

Antoon's portrait, a harsh and unsentimental one, also remains rooted in this rock of family life. Jawad's father is a second one, also, come to think of it, the venerable corpse-washer in this house. The corpse-maker is thus a source for both generation strain and mutual comity. His mother is Iraq's tough, pragmatic mother. There's some shade within those great archetypes, luckily, instead of being overdrawn entirely as if they were Japanese puppets. In its pages, Antoon's picture of Iraqi life reveals how families navigate sorrow, tradition, and survival. Each of these is one face: Iraq has many faces.

Antoon's depiction of community life is not romanticized, but layered with sorrow, weariness, and silent perseverance. Jawad's own generation is middle-class by nature and profession. In addition to his encounters with artists and scholars, revivals through works such as Summers Long, Laden with Hours, recurrently position him as a representative of this class. His struggles for survival and experiences of death continue breaking his hopes of being a painter. "I wanted to paint the city's soul, but all I saw were its wounds." (Antoon 91) In such lines the contradiction between longing for aesthetics and hard experience becomes palpable, a mark of Antoon's humanized storytelling voice.

For example, the book still intercepts the informal and inlaid links of everyday life which hold Iraqis together at the same time as institutional fabric disintegrates. Bad news stands no chance; across lines, relatives gather as carelessly as ever. Everywhere one turns people look sleepy; Yet of course Jawad's charges they bleed and they bring not only corpses, but also tales. These stories form a social collective biography; It is the care, or at least the absence of state. "They came with tears and dates," Jawad recalls, "and left with silence and prayers" (Antoon 103). These are certain

emotional labour elements of mourning when death is a universal experience yet remains routine.

The detail Antoon brings to Iraqi life is more than simply a focus on language. He scatters Arabic words, idioms, and references to culture with no footnotes to explain them, presuming that the readers can hack their way through a thicket of his subject's native tongue on their own. This grammatical choice resists the temptation to render Iraqi experience 'comprehensible' for a Western reader which in critics peak means that you're buttering them up. A literary bro terms Antoon 'resistance to the normalization of cultural characteristics' and dings his prose style accordingly: this "preserves the rhythm and texture of Baghdad's vernacular". The result is a book that seems lived-in rather than exhibited a literary territory in which Iraqi people (one therefore presumes) may find themselves and other humans approach as obedient listeners. (143)

Antoon firmly refuses to separate Iraq's way of life from politics: that is the key point. The authenticity of a community is unveiled against the backdrop of threats and perils that beset it. Sectarian militias, foreign occupation, economic disintegration - these are actual forces which encircle Jawad every day. There is thus a formal indictment at work in form, setting, and emotional reverb; readers are required to see as well as or rather than being told.

To Antoon, it's a question of literary ethics: Respecting the span of cultural memory; not letting suffering be viewed as a consumer item. Jawad explains in his memoir this is not some book aiming for consumption outside of Iraq, and so comes to us in a strikingly direct emotional manner, marked by cultural specifics. "I didn't want to be a symbol," Jawad reflects, "I just wanted to live, to paint, to bury the dead with dignity" (Antoon 147). This spirit is typical of Antoon's close-writing approach his characters are not symbols or case histories but humans fabricated from history, pain and desire.

The form of the novel is in Active correspondence with its realism. Antoon sidesteps linearity, intertwining memory with dream and ritual in a narration as fractured as the experience of war itself. It's not a contrast to show off, but rather a reflection of the horror of iraqis' psychological and cultural breakdown. Reviewers

noted that Antoon's own body is an "echoes the rhythms of mourning and survival in a society where time itself has been disrupted" (Venkat 497). The result is not a novel built so much as lived in a literary house here Iraqi voices are allowed to speak for themselves.

Not to translate certain cultural references or provide explanations of religious practices is clearly political. In asserting the coherence of iraqi life, he denies this imperial gaze of legibility or recognizability. His prose haunts the reader with world that is rich, contradictory, and full of feeling. Jawad glances across Baghdad and sees not just destruction but beauty as well: "The jasmine still bloomed in some courtyards, defiant and fragrant" (Antoon 152). This surviving, mute image is a testament to how the Iraqis continue to live and even after our death life goes on. The *Corpse Washer* overall is a finely authentıcated and humanised glance at Iraq, its people. In Jawad's rites, relations and reflective thoughts, Antoon relocates the humanity of a civilization that has far too often been reduced to mere statistics and newspaper headlines. Thus his fiction is a sort of cultural resistance a repository for memory, emotion and caring. Antoon's choice of Iraqi voices, and the need to recognize their complex relationships to warfare, is an editorial stance that challenges. That is why he urges us not to ask what could have been in its place but rather what it is. To grasp that truth is not in headlines but in the continuations of the actions of will required over time.

## Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Sinan Antoon's fiction which offers one of the most compelling literary examinations of Iraqi identity in the aftermath of war, occupation, and displacement. Through the intertwined narratives of *The Corpse Washer* and *The Book of Collateral Damage*, Antoon portrays identity not as a stable inheritance, but as an ongoing negotiation shaped by trauma, memory, and survival. Drawing on postcolonial frameworks from Stuart Hall's view of identity as a continuous production to Homi Bhabha's concepts of hybridity and liminality the analysis reveals that Iraqi identity has been fractured, reconfigured, and reimagined through decades of violence and forced migration.

Antoon's protagonists, Jawad

and Nameer, embody complementary forms of displacement: Jawad endures an internal exile within Iraq's necropolitical landscape, while Nameer experiences an immigrant's fragmented existence in America, haunted by the ruins of the homeland he has left behind. Their stories reflect how war erodes cultural continuity, disintegrates communal bonds, and transforms the individual into both witness and survivor. Yet Antoon's work refuses to reduce Iraqis to passive victims; instead, it restores depth and humanity to voices often silenced in global narratives. By exposing the intersection of foreign invasion, sectarianism, and epistemic violence, Antoon critiques the dominant Western frameworks that commodify Iraqi suffering and simplify the complexities of Iraqi society. His novels challenge readers to confront the symbolic erasure of Iraq's history and to recognize the resilience embedded in everyday rituals, language, and memory. Ultimately, Antoon's writing becomes a form of literary resistance that preserves what war attempts to obliterate.

In conclusion, Antoon's works reveal that Iraqi identity is not merely something lost or destroyed, but something continually reconstructed in the face of displacement and death. Identity becomes an act of survival, a process of remembering, and a refusal to disappear. Through the voices of Jawad and Nameer, Antoon affirms that literature can bear witness to national trauma while safeguarding the multiplicity and dignity of Iraqi experience

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