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**DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS: A
POSTCOLONIAL READING
OF SELECTED IRAQI
NOVELS AFTER
2003**



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ZEENAT ABDULKADHIM MEHDI ALKRITI



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THESIS PRESENTED TO QUALIFY FOR A DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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DEDICATION

To the kindhearted Kadhim(s) in my life,

My late father, God forgive him

And my gorgeous humble husband, God bless him



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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research was to analyze the feeling of double consciousness by Iraqi individuals who live in diaspora as reflected in post-2003 selected Iraqi novels. The study applied the theory of double consciousness by W.E.B. Du Bois within the context of internal and external diasporic settings and attempted to determine how the hybrid identities were revealed in the selected texts. The study also defined the duality in the subaltern characters and the way they were treated in the selected post-2003 Iraqi novels. The study applied the theory of double consciousness within the umbrella theory of postcolonialism with its relevant themes of diaspora, hybridism, and the subaltern as reproducing contexts. The findings reveal the fact of the recurrent duality of selves of the diasporic characters during their short return to their homelands or during their internal displacement. In addition, the characters fail to be reconciled with the identity of the host land while simultaneously failing to have a sense of belonging to their homelands. Being treated as second-class citizens and due to the fearful and uneven co-existence, the subalterns endure the state of double consciousness. As conclusion, the study reveals the psychical dilemma of the protagonists in the internal and external settings with an unresolved sense of double consciousness. The implication indicates that double consciousness has become the prevailing case for the referred Iraqi diasporas. The persistent occurrence of in-betweenness in postcolonial Iraqi society is analogous to what Du Bois has referred to regarding the feeling of warring self of those living in diaspora.





KESEDARAN BERGANDA: BACAAN PASKA-KOLONIAL NOVEL-NOVEL PILIHAN IRAQ

ABSTRAK

Objektif kajian ini ialah untuk menganalisa perasaan kesedaran berganda yang dialami oleh individu berasal dari Iraq yang menetap di alam diaspora sebagaimana yang dibayangkan di dalam novel-novel pilihan paska-2003 Iraq. Kajian ini mengaplikasikan teori kesedaran berganda oleh W.E.B. Du Bois di dalam konteks diaspora dalaman dan luaran dan cuba untuk menentukan bagaimana identiti diri hybrid didedahkan di dalam teks pilihan tersebut. Kajian ini juga menentukan dualitas di dalam diri watak-watak subaltern dan bagaimana mereka dilayan di dalam novel-novel pilihan paska-2003 Irak. Kajian ini mengaplikasikan teori kesedaran berganda di dalam teori payung paskakolonialisme dengan tema paling relevan seperti diaspora, hibriditi, dan subaltern sebagai konteks utama. Hasil kajian ini mengesahkan kehadiran kesedaran berganda yang dialami oleh watak-watak diaspora yang terserlah semasa kepulangan sementara mereka ke negara asal dan semasa pengalaman pengusiran di dalam negara. Tambahan lagi, watak-watak tersebut menderita akibat mempunyai identiti berganda kerana mereka gagal menerima identiti negara tumpang di samping penolakan oleh negara asal terhadap identiti baru mereka. Akibat dilayan seperti rakyat kelas kedua, dan kerana kewujudan yang menakutkan dan disisih para subaltern ini sentiasa di dalam status kesedaran berganda. Sebagai kesimpulan, kajian ini mendedahkan dilema psikikal yang dialami oleh watak-watak utama berkait dengan kelangsungan hidup dalam konteks kesedaran dalaman dan luaran dengan isu kesedaran berganda yang tidak dapat diselesaikan. Implikasi kajian ini menunjukkan realiti masyarakat diaspora Irak yang menderita akibat mengalami perasaan kesedaran berganda. Insiden perasaan tidak berada di mana-mana yang berterusan ini sama dengan apa yang dijelaskan oleh Du Bois iaitu perasaan dalaman yang berperang pada mereka yang tinggal di alam diaspora.



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Superiority? Inferiority? Why not simply try to touch the other, feel the other, discover each other? Was my freedom not given me to build the world of you, man? (Fanon, 1952, p. 206)



1.1 Background of the Study

Iraqi literature, during the last two decades, has become impregnated with chromatic literary tendencies that epitomize and reflect the political, social, and psychological aftereffects resulting from the overcritical climate of the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. The most unlimited, open field of literary texts, the novel, possesses styles of discourse and diversity of modern and postmodern theories that are mainly adopted from modern Western culture.





During pre-2003 era, the political authorities did not encourage writing novels in a way that could compete the way it was written or published or distributed elsewhere in the Middle East. The only fiction, which was produced by Iraqis, was written in exile, as intellectuals were regarded with suspicion in the course of the preceding three decades. Artists were the favorite objects of interrogation since those who refused to let down their vocations were extremely restricted and inclined more to symbolism than to realism. They escaped the issues of injustice and the government's oppressive policies, having a preference to show tribute to wars and to praise death while faking devotion to the regime (Hamedawi, 2017).

Many religious and ethnic minority groups—such as Christian, Turkoman, and

Yezidi, the major and most marked ethno sectarian divisions are among three groups: Arab-Shia, Arab-Sunni, and Kurds. They all are far from monolithic (Matsunaga, 2019). After the collapse of the regime because of the invasion in 2003, these groups started giving emphasis to their differences to improve their political power. Further increasing divisions within the country are witnessed clearly. “Some of the actions taken by the United States–led occupation force may have inadvertently entrenched identity divisions further” (Matsunaga, 2019, p. 24).

Actually, April 9th 2003 was a critical date. It was not until this time that Iraqis in general and novelists in particular, who had not already fled Iraq, were freed from their mental exile. They started to write the rich works that established the general characteristics of the Iraqi postcolonial novel (Hamedawi, 2017, parg. 8). Generally, the post-2003 Iraqi novels fall into two categories: those reflecting the violations of the





previous regime and those confronting the fundamental transformation in all aspects of life brought about by the 2003 invasion. This second one symbolizes a new tendency, essentially concerned with enlightening the influence of the war and the new colonialism on the country (Hamedawi, 2017). From 2003 on, a flood of novels focused on documenting as accurately as possible the events and violations of the invasion that represents a modern colonialism. No wonder that the dominating common theme in the Iraqi post-2003 novel is the overwhelming political, economic, and social devastation of the country. The most obvious debated themes were: war, racism, murder, ethnic murder, death threats, rape, political corruption and injustice, kidnapping, the collapse of ideologies, ethnic discrimination, economic, social and moral deterioration, identity crisis, the destruction of monuments, oil theft and migration. These issues were addressing the Iraqi realism and contributing to the structure of the identity of the Iraqi



novel after 2003 (Hamedawi, 2017).

Iraqi novels make known the constructedness of Iraqi personality. Novels by Sinan Antoon, Ali Bader, Inaam Kachachchi, and others work as spots of negotiation that confound and disconcert the prototypes of ethno-religious belonging offered outside of novel. These literary expressions of Iraqi alternative identities were manufactured in diaspora. This fact aligns with the idea that the diaspora practice provides for a “literature of trespassing” cultural, geographic, and historic conditions. . (Hanoosh, 2019, p. 10). According to literary critic Abd Allah Ibrahim, “this diaspora fiction is the product of the author’s impression of belonging to two identities or more at once, and at the same time the impression of not belonging to any identity.





The vision of this literature relies on the idea of deconstructing unified, absolute identities” (Hanoosh, 2019, p. 11). As consequence to deconstructing, “a self that neither belongs in diaspora nor in a fragmented Iraq, the diasporic authors also deconstruct the properties customarily associated with ethno-religious identities in Iraq” (Hanoosh, 2019, p. 4-5).

After 2003, and due to an overall sense of freedom, authors started writing both about issues that date back to earlier decades and to contemporary phases. One of these concerns is the displacement of Iraqi people in far-off Western and neighboring countries. It is true that this is a common issue, especially during the last five decades or so. But what distinguishes the exodus after 2003 is that it has ensued as a reaction to Iraq’s annexation by the alliance of America and other countries, which has also marked this as an era of dominant modern colonization. Due to this estrangement, a sense of exploring the authentic and indisputable individual Iraqi identity has sprung up.

Under the influence of the overwhelming bias and unfairness of Western influence, the literary production of the post-2003 era of Iraqi authors generally reflects the impact of postcolonialism and has evolved an obvious inclination toward this topic in relevant texts and studies. Several writers have dedicated some of their works to frame the most innate needs of some of their people as well as some of their characters as being overloaded, psychologically and socially. This is considered as the writers’ defense of those individuals and a way to bring together the shattered parts of society after colonisation or any other aggressive form of dehumanization.





1.1.1 Postcolonial Theory

In most cases, postcolonial studies or writings, by themselves, have been treated as a “radical break” that disproves previous discourses and interchanges (Sorensen, 2010). This explains the phenomenal radical tendency of writing of Iraqi writers to configure the different dimensions of displaced Iraqi characters. This distress takes its shape during and after the oppressive treatment by the other (colonizers or oppressors) exemplified by the US invasion in the post-2003 era.

This broad scope of aspects shows how important it is to determine which term of the umbrella theory, postcolonialism, should be used and why. Principally, it is not clear how the terms “postcolonial” and “postcolonialism,” which then are bounded by ‘postcoloniality’, first came into usage. In some ways, the terms carry a sense of periodization (Sorensen, 2010). This is quite clear in the debate concerning the “broken” and “unbroken” terms of, successively, “post-colonialism,” which means after colonization, and ‘postcolonialism’ in reference to the continuous imperial effect. Simply, they denote variant implications of the influence and interference of colonialism (Harrison, 2003). As pointed out by Leela Gandhi (1998), the hyphenated “post-colonial” indicates to many critics the period from colonization onwards as representative of the postcolonial condition. Thus, it is argued that the unbroken term “postcolonialism” is more sensitive to the long history of colonial consequences.





As a result, this research study adopts the unbroken term “postcolonialism” due to the general and inexorable impact that exists during and after colonization regardless to whether it is a modern one or not. Depending on this conceptual understanding, relevant concepts, among others, have emerged from the realization and theory of “postcolonialism.” Such concepts are “cultural colonization,” “diaspora,” “hybridism,” and “hyphenated identity” or “subaltern,” from all of which arises double consciousness. Generally, these concepts have become universal and, somehow, confined in orientation.

Generally, postcolonial literatures are sometimes called the “new literatures in English,” which emphasizes the contemporary nature of their histories, or “world literature,” which outlines their worldwide nature and intensifies the topographical extension of colonialisms, past and present (Mullaney, 2010). Also, the term postcolonialism refers to a number of critical practices or approaches used to comprehend the numerous dimensions and consequences of colonization and its aftermath. The critical and theoretical voices associated with postcolonial studies or criticism include Edward Said, Frantz Fanon, Gayatri Spivak, Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabha, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Helen Tiffin, Benita Parry, Aijaz Ahmed, and Partha Chatterjee (Mullaney, 2010). On the other hand, modern fiction studies (MFS) have been at the center of this field. The era of modern fiction relates with the climax of Western imperial global authority. It has reflected the shifts in literary studies that led to the rise of postcolonial scholarship in the 1980s and also has been a vital cause of the development and transformation of the field (Marzec, 2008).





Actually, national narratives are categorized by means of postcolonialism into three categories: national, antinational, and postnational. These categories often set up national narratives strategically as formulae of local resistance to the encroachment of global capital (Marzec, 2008). These political concepts also refer to relevant dimensions as having something in common with postcolonialism. This means that they are interrelated to each other. Opinions on this aspect have stated that the inheritance of imperialism and political claims is noticeably implied in the decolonized phase in the thoughtful demands of the colonized such as nationhood, constitutionality, citizenship, democracy, and even culturalism (Mongia, 1997). In view of this, postcolonial literature can be recalled as being under the heading of “commonwealth literature,” as it was called with until the 1980s. Yet, the effectiveness of postcolonial criticism is predominantly in helping us see connections among all the domains of our experiences—the psychological, ideological, social, political, intellectual, and aesthetic. This shows just how inseparable these categories are in the lived experiences of ourselves and our world. Besides, it is considered as a framework for examining the common points among all critical theories that deal with human oppression, such as Marxism, feminism, gay, lesbian, and queer theories, and African American theory (Tyson, 2006).

As a domain, postcolonial criticism is both a subject matter and a theoretical framework. Also, postcolonial culture holds both a “merger” of and “antagonism” between the culture of the colonized and that of the colonizer, which again, are not easy to take apart into isolated entities (Tyson, 2006). In addition to that, the development of postcolonial theory also needs to be understood in terms of new socio-historic





pressures. These pressures have something in common with all forms of “general sociology,” meaning that social processes containing structure are self-contained entities with their own lives which mostly decide the consciousness and behavior of individual human beings within their contexts (Schwartz, 1955). The political concepts that have formed modern history—democracy, the citizen, nationalism—no longer look acceptable for dealing with contemporary realities. Yet, the limits of such elder notions as community, the individual and the nation have been exposed with the rise of new social movements around such issues as race, gender and ethnicity. Mainly, postcolonial theory has been formed as a response to certain pressures referred to as thoughtful changes, such as decolonization, and new distributions of global power (Mongia, 1997).



Realistically, the disputes that have stormed since the 1980s under the deep heading of ‘multiculturalism’ influence the way of understanding the rise of postcolonial theory in metropolitan academics (Mongia, 1997). This widened scope of this is quite vibrant in the defining theatrical work by Greg Garrard *Ecocriticism* (2004), which is related, to some extent, to postcolonialism by focusing on pollution, destruction and exploitation of natural spaces. Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (1962) and Arundhati Roy’s Booker Prize winning novel *The God of Small Things* (1997) are two examples of Eco critical concerns. The second text is dominated by the environment rather than the events of the characters (Ramone, 2011).





The meeting points between postcolonial and Eco critical perspectives are the political commitment and postcolonial literature. The theory reviews and remaps the depiction of the physical environment in both literary and non-literary texts, such as anthropological accounts and travel writings (Ramone, 2011). Postcolonial theory, regardless of the sociological definition, helps modify the associations of the terms migration and migrancy. In postcolonial literary theory, the figure of the “asylum seeker” gradually becomes a celebrated one, and migrancy comes to be a metaphor that recommends alternate and conquering interpretations of culture. Andrew Smith says that migrancy “has now become ‘ubiquitous’ as a theoretical term. It specifically denotes to migration not as an act, but as a condition of human life” (Smith, 2004, p. 257). Generally, the most prominent of the dominant themes in postcolonial literature and postcolonial theory, which are place and displacement, exile and the need of finding and describing “home,” have been key concerns (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 1989).

It is evidently difficult to distinguish between the two concepts of home and homeland. They have become extremely weakened in a modern world undergoing migration on a considerable scale and in view of the rapid progress in communication and information interchange among its distant parts (Naguib, 2011). These varied personal experiences of home make it difficult to clearly distinguish between the home and (national) homeland or home country. These experiences also complicate the relationship between exile and nationalism (as a form of belonging) because the definitions of home and homeland bring into question the issue of nationalism, nationality and their links to identity (Naguib, 2011).





1.1.2 Double Consciousness

In general, as a modern sociological and postcolonial concept, “double consciousness” was asserted by William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (1868–1963) in 1903. It is dedicated to African American people and seems to be of great validity, especially in what happens to Iraqi asylum seekers and migrants nowadays. It points to the psychological challenge and experience of reconciling or harmonizing his (Du Bois’s) African heritage with an upbringing in European-dominated society.

Double-consciousness is identified here as a “sensation” which falls short of “true” self-consciousness, but is a consciousness of one’s self, nonetheless. It is also part of a more complex feeling of “two-ness,” of disparate and competing “thoughts,” “strivings,” and “ideals.” This is not an episodic or occasional sensation, but a fixed and persistent form of consciousness. It is ascribed to “the Negro ... in this American world,” meaning that it seems to be a socio-cultural construct rather than a baldly bioracial given, and it is particularly attributed to people of African descent in America. The “two-ness” of which it is a consciousness is thus not inherent, accidental, nor benign; the condition is both imposed and concerned with psychic danger. It is presented as arising in conjunction with two other phenomena related to two other figures: the “veil,” and the “gift” of “second-sight.” Of these, “the veil” is the more insistent motif, recurring regularly throughout *The Souls of Black Folk* as well as other writings of Du Bois. By contrast, the terms “double-consciousness” and “second-sight” seem not to have been used in print by Du Bois after 1903. Still, this passage has come to have a “singular significance in the philosophical interpretation of Du Bois’s thought as well as for the influence of his views” (Pittman, 2016, para. 6).





According to historian Edward J. Blum (2007), Du Bois wrote *The Souls of Black Folk* in response to the racism and discrimination that the Blacks had suffered at the hands of the Whites in America. White folks had access to the heavenly realms and the future of human events in ways the soul-less, spiritually alienated Blacks did not. Du Bois recognized the fusion of race and divinity among Euro-Americans and how it allowed White folks to justify some of the most terrible, hateful acts of human history (Blum, 2007). Du Bois proved the fatal assumption that he, as an intellectual, Black human, could not speak of his inner, outer, and divine realities for he was treated as one of the exploited and downtrodden people of God. According to Blum, Du Bois could be acknowledged as the forerunner of Black liberation theology because it was his scholarship that first suggested Black folks are the true children of God. No doubt, Du Bois wrote in a spiritually racist social context. Nevertheless, he was not frightened by the remarkable task of attempting to mess up ideas and attitudes unacceptable of any scientific proof concerning the rightfulness of the humanity of Black folks.

Blum (2007) argued, “With *Souls*, he [Du Bois] established himself as an American prophet called by God to shed new light on the souls of white and black folk” (p. 64). This point by Blum was affirmed by African American scholars, activists, ministers, and civic leaders. In 1970, after seven years after his death, they esteemed Du Bois as a Black Titan, who feverishly struggled for the racial, social, and authentic political emancipation of the souls of Black folk in the African diaspora (Clarke et al., 1970). This brief positioning of Du Bois does not do justice to the scope, depth, and width of his scholarly publications on the problem of race.





Nevertheless, it provides a working context for those who are being introduced to him for the first time, or who may have forgotten the work and life of the scholar, which extends over six decades (Crozier, 2008). According to its nature, “double consciousness” was the core of the social and political experience of non-White people. The one-sided nature of the perception of this term was highly emphasized by Du Bois. He illuminated and worked to come up with vital resolutions for his African American people undergoing the sense of double consciousness. As a civil activist, he worked as a member of a group known as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909 to help those people politically and socially. Relevantly, it was argued that assumed inferiority was essential to the political identity of the country to which one uncertainly and dubiously belonged (Persram, 2007).



Crozier (2008) refers to this concept as W. E. B. Du Bois’ psychosocial theory of race, which is generally identified as “double-consciousness.” He has done so to indicate how African Americans are able to move through life when their ethical activity is truly controlled by internal and external powers. Crozier (2008) further states,

Du Bois is mindful and keenly aware of the complexity of abiding in a darker hued skin as he elucidates reality behind the veil of the white, dominant gaze and the terror of white dominance. In a most lucid manner, he irradiates the deep yearnings and unfulfilled realities of those of the black race. Furthermore, he unveils for all the deep angst and spiritual struggle of a people, as well as the soullessness of a nation.
(p. 77)





Socially or politically, an individual with such inferiority has no certainty of being appropriate within the supposed comfort of multicultural society or fitting into foreign communities. The individual is not necessarily at peace being in the midst of many other cultures in the same place. It is proven that not all divergence is the same (Persram, 2007). The multi-ethnic groups, within a certain community, are not necessarily harmonized, and that is why such individuals, in some way, live with a multi-faced identity. Such a community is definitely postcolonial as well as one of exile. Diaspora, mimicry, subaltern, and hybridity are some examples of this multiculturalism in homelands and host lands.

The problem of the colour-line, as Du Bois put it, was the main issue of the twentieth century in contrast to other social and economic needs. He even doubted that the gaining of fortune and economic independence for African Americans were more important than acquiring the privilege to vote and civil rights in America, generally. By this claim, Du Bois contrasted with Booker T. Washington, the most prominent African American activist recognized as a supporter by various African Americans who embraced his self-help autobiography *Up from Slavery* (1901) as their guidebook to enhance fortunes. Washington's purpose in this writing this book was to put forward that even the most underprivileged of Black people could achieve dignity and wealth in the South. This achievement was deemed attainable by proving themselves as valued, dynamic members of society deserving justice and equal treatment before the law (Giles, Blair, & Dickstein, 2017).





That is why Du Bois's social philosophy, the concept of double consciousness reflecting postcolonial and African American criticism underlying issues, focuses on the innate nature of struggle and need. In fact, this is felt by lowered and subordinated groups of people in a brutal oppressive inhuman society or dissimilar one. Those individuals picture themselves as both insider and outsider, which is indicative of a split or shattered consciousness. It is the two-ness that matters for them. This comes under what is known as "acculturation," which is acquiring another culture in a disadvantageous companionable situation (Landrine & Klonoff, 1996).

A discussion by the Social Science Research Council (1954) emphasized that assimilation was not merely a kind of acculturation; it could also be reactive (activating resistance to change in both groups), creative (encouraging new cultural forms not found in either of the cultures in contact), and delayed (starting changes that appear more fully years later). A distinction had been made by Graves (1967) between acculturation as a collective or group-level phenomenon and psychological acculturation. In the former, acculturation was a change in the culture of a group; in the later, acculturation was a change in the psychology of an individual. This distinction between levels was important for two reasons: first, in order to examine the systematic relationships between these two sets of variables; and second, because not all individuals participate to the same extent in the general acculturation being experienced by their group.





The classical definition of acculturation was presented by Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1936). Acculturation, related to those phenomena, resulted when groups of individuals having diverse cultures came into continuous first-hand interaction. This contact was followed with subsequent changes in the initial cultural patterns of either or both groups. Although acculturation was principally a neutral term (i.e., change may take place in either or both groups), in practice, acculturation tended to bring more change to one of the groups than the other (Berry, 1990a). Generally, the four generic types of acculturation had been commonly labelled as (a) assimilation, (b) separation, (c) integration, and (d) marginalization, following the practice of Berry (1997).

In general, acculturation, among other concepts related to identity, includes racial socialization. These processes, like racial identity, are affected by family and other sociocultural and environmental processes. Usually, acculturation refers to the extent to which ethnic minorities participate in the cultural traditions, values, beliefs, and practices of their own culture versus the mainstream White culture (Landrine, 1996). Besides, many modern theories of enculturation, which is “the process by which people learn the requirements of their surrounding culture and acquire values and behaviours appropriate or necessary in that culture” (Grusec, & Hastings, 2007, p. 547), are relevantly asserted. They claim that ethnic minorities (including aboriginal natives, immigrants, refugees, and sojourners) can favour either the dominant culture, or their own minority culture, or both, or neither (Rudmin, 2003). This concern has much to do with a certain postcolonial concept, which is hybridism.





1.1.3 Hybridism

As a postcolonial concern, hybridism results as a consequence of the scattering of groups of people who live far from their ancestral homeland. As a product of late capitalist globalization, the lack of attention to political and economic difference makes possible the encouragement of hybridity. The debate on cultural creativity, syncretism, diffusion, race and biology (the history of migration, language, culture, and ‘blood’) hints certain considerations. These considerations are on what syncretism and hybridity, as terms, can do for the control of more stable cultural aspects of colonialism (Hutnyk, 2005).

Robert Young (1995) traces the origin of the term in the botanical and biological sciences up to its existence in Eurocentric discourses of race that function to trouble or support the plan of Empire in various ways. He also explores the mechanism of the movement of hybridity through time from dealing with racial intermixture to addressing cultural intermixing that disrupts the common notions of cultural purity. Frantz Fanon (1952) claims an extensive increase of hybridization which emphasizes hybridity, as an ongoing process of intermixing and interchange, as a cause of transformation and resistance and as a sign of the agency rather than the complete control of the colonized. It is claimed by Floya Anthias (2010) that the concept of hybridity, although denoting important developments and challenges to static and essential notions of ethnicity and identity, presents both conceptual and fundamental difficulties. She argued that by evolving the concept of “translocational,” positionality is a more suitable means for tackling the range of issues connected to belonging and which are addressed by the concept of hybridity.





In relation to the appropriation of such hybrid individuals, Benedict Anderson, in his *Imagined Communities* (1991), has referred to an idea asserting that what is known as the nation is by itself a very conditional and dependent concept. It is based on visualized ideal connections between the members of that presumed group. In fact, an individual's national identity is incomprehensible with migration. As Homi Bhabha has explained in *Nation and Narration* (1990), the concept of nation, by itself, is controversial and multiple, and his notion of hybridity regarded it as a temporary process. Instead, according to Said, post migration and different nationalisms are necessary considerations. The necessity comes from a need to drive out feelings of exile and to create a sense of belonging (Ramone, 2011). So, the new shapes and feelings of newly born groups (or nations) of migrants do not matter socially but psychologically.



Lately, “transnationalism” has been introduced as a substitute perception in international migration studies. The continuing relations between immigrants and their place of origin and how this back-and-forth transfer transpires are the main concerns of the emerging concept. As a result, this issue forms complex social fields overlapping national borders (Maloney & Korinek, 2010). One more reliable fact correlated to this issue involves the social and psychological sufferings of individuals which are sometimes linked with being cut off from cultural and social belongingness to their homeland. Consequently, an individual with double consciousness or dual consciousness, as Fanon (1952) expresses it, experiences a sense of perpetually being in between. Again, it is not only the anticolonial or postcolonial reaction that is behind this, but also the politics because postcolonialism is occasionally described, according to Peter Berry (2009), as “political correctness.” Thus, the setting of such individuals is applicable to diaspora.





1.1.4 Diaspora (Iraqi Diaspora)

Primarily, fundamental transitions and political conflicts have shaped the 20th century's waves of migration. The diaspora of native Iraqis who have left Iraq as migrants or refugees is regarded as one of the largest recent displacements. This displacement following the invasion of Iraq and the subsequent war in 2003 is regarded by the UN as a humanitarian crisis (www.wikipedia.com, 2009). An assessment done by the UN High Commission on Refugees in 2006 estimated that the ongoing conflict in Iraq alone caused over a million refugees in its period of influence. It also found that there were, at the time, close to ten million refugees worldwide. These numbers do not include the vast population that relocated for economic or social reasons (Maloney & Korinek, 2010).



Like in other mass departures, Iraqi diasporic groups, for diverse reasons, encounter the same sociological and psychological requisites in relation to identifying themselves in the midst of the foreign societies of their host countries. In fact, it is not only America in which Iraqi asylum seekers and migrants need such identification and self-recognition. This innate personal travail could be experienced in any place that makes it hard for such migrants to be involved in the new and different society, culture, traditions and language of that place. In connection to this point, Black (2007) persuasively argues that the postcolonial works of Fanon offer the clear-cut view that colonized people would experience the condition of double consciousness. He credits this strong linking between people of colour who live in America and colonized people to the strong connection between colonialism and racism. For him, the main commonality between the individuals and subjects appropriate to these groups is the





experience of “autonomous” and “unhealthy” double consciousness. In his article “Arab American’s Feeling of Double-consciousness: A Critical African-American’s View,” Shehabat (2015) referred to being an Arab American who, in this case, is not looked upon as a full American citizen or a first class citizen in America, and also who is not regarded a full Arab in his or her native country.

In view of that, what is supposed to be pushing and affecting the African Americans, socially, politically, and psychologically, is quite close to the resulting feelings and thoughts of the drifting migratory Iraqi people around the world. It appears that they are in between and look for a kind of a personal reserved stability on the psychological and social level, generally. They clearly have the two-ness and the duality of the African American individuals. Citizenship, at the same time, does not guarantee the total involvement of those migrants into the host world. These individuals are trapped amongst many conflicting ideas that pull them back to their native home and at the same time, push them forward to the sheltering or host home. Political as well as social influences make those migrants almost unable to shape their insecure identities.

In contrast to the past Arabs in diaspora observed in terms of historical waves of immigrants, since the 9/11 predicament, migrant Arabs have been put under an inquiring and mistrustful light. According to Abraham, Howell, and Shryock (2011) Said’s common sense of psychological estrangement echoes with Du Bois’s notion of double consciousness. As a result of the growing anxiety between the West and some





Arab countries, the sense of a “double life” has not declined over the last few years. This feeling experienced by Arab immigrants found its reflection in what is known as Anglophone Arab Literature (Abdul-Jabbar, 2014). Written by Arab American/British authors, Anglophone Arab literature has been welcomed by the Western world despite its being considered as minor work penned by writers of Arab origin. The experience of dislocation depicted by Arab migrant writers or Arab migrants in general is well identified with the novel *I, the Divine* by Rabih Alameddine (2002), for example. Here, the protagonist, who is born to a Lebanese father and an American mother, contemplates about her confusing identity, “Whenever she is in Beirut, home is New York. Whenever she is in New York, home is Beirut. Home is never where she is, but where she is not” (p. 99) (Darraj, 2002). Similarly, Iraqi individuals, especially intellectuals, are being welcomed by some European host authorities, but this does not save them from suffering alienation. Such feelings are dealt with through the validation on one’s instinctive confidence in the face of being torn into two by the memories and cultural inheritance of the native home. This is what most of the main and even minor character witness in the selected Iraqi novels after 2003 in this research study.

These Iraqi novels translated into English are among other untranslated texts which are based on the idea of having dissimilar identities owing to a certain political, mainly postcolonial, ambiance. Inaam Kachachi’s *The American Granddaughter* (2010), Ali Bader’s *The Tobacco Keeper* (2011), Sinan Antoon’s *The Book of Collateral Damage* (2019), and Antoon’s *The Baghdad Eucharist* (2017) are all relevant to this issue. In some ways, they are centred on the idea of their characters’ experiencing, directly or indirectly, the yearning for and integration of their intended





authentic identities, especially in their second coming to their native home. On the other hand, the writers of the texts, themselves, have been experiencing this sense of living inside and outside their native home, Iraq. So, the reflection of the highlighted postcolonial issues is very vibrant and close to the point. The identity that seeks reconciliation by the protagonists in these Iraqi literary texts is accordingly close to the identity intended behind elaborating the concept of double consciousness claimed by W. E. B. Du Bois in his book *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) dedicated to African Americans. So, it is a kind of testing of the characters' feelings in both their host and native homes because they have the sensation of being physically here (the host country) and emotionally or culturally there (the native country), all the time. Likewise, the longing and belongingness of the main characters in the four selected Iraqi novels are depicted in relation to their traditions and Iraqi cultural background. This is accompanied with a sense of unpredictability concerning the politically unstable situations there for the last two decades. To be exiled from one's own country, willingly or unwillingly, is something so challenging that it presents an individual with an unlimited, non-stop clash of ideas.

1.1.5 Subaltern (Hyphenated Identity)

Comparatively, postcolonial and sometimes political reactions grow as a must for the unlimited demand of those who are called "subaltern" being relieved from the emotion of dehumanization, directly or indirectly. The racialized others are referred to as 'subaltern'. This term was derived from Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci's vocabulary, where the subaltern was a "subordinate" or "dependent." Yet, "subalternity" was "the common quality of subordination in South Asian society whether this is stated in terms





of class, background, age, gender and workplace or in any other way (Guha, 1982a). The historiography of subaltern has tried to secure “the small voice of history,” where the special patterns of nationalism have been developed in disobedience to or in the absence of elite control (Guha, 1982b). As Nayar (2010) puts it, Subaltern Studies is a ‘history from below’, and often applies resources in native, that is non-colonial, non-official languages such as folk songs, ballads, stories, etc., for its purpose. In another place, he argues that subalternization is the way through which postcolonial nation-states validate certain identities and marginalize certain others. The marginality of certain groups of people of different cultures indicates the main reason behind the feeling of double consciousness, generally.

In her influential essay, Gayatri Spivak (1991) re-evaluated the problems of subalternity with groups. Her reasoning for this rejection of Gramscian opinion was grounded on her view that this autonomy results in homogeneity of the subaltern group and subaltern subjective identity (Spivak, 1991). As Du Bois once said in his famous book *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), “How does it feel to be a problem?” This saying was in reference to old and subsequent social illnesses encountered by recent generations of African Americans. They continue embracing the same condition and continue asking the same question differently as, “How does it feel to know that one out of four black men in the United States will find themselves in prison, before they ever find themselves in college?” It was also raised as “How does it feel that every thirty-six hours a black man (or woman) is killed or brutalized by law enforcement?” which denoted that they live under a system where everything, especially the law, was applied differently to them (Robinson, 2014, para. 3).





Such a state is quite applicable to the recent Iraqi asylum seekers, especially in America. For years, the organized Arab American community has been lobbying without success to be recognized with minority status (Higginbotham & Anderson, 2006). As a result, being a minority in host lands has put those Iraqi individuals into a state of dual or double consciousness. It is an in-betweenness that marks the critical condition of Iraqis in exile, particularly after 2003.

1.1.6 Multi-Voices (Heteronym, Polyphonic)

The different identities of the same individual, or of the same character, are realised through the application of techniques serving a multiplicity of ideas, opinions, emotions and reactions. The literary structure itself provides for this controversial purpose of the text or by extension, the writer of the text, as well. One of these techniques used in some novels is “heteronym,” used originally by the Portuguese poet and writer Fernando Pessoa (1888-1935). It involves each heteronym being given a biography, psychology, politics, religion, and even physical description, and yet the main characters are interconnected. Actually, they are contradicting each other and together forming a kind of manifesto on the self-internalized variations through the act of writing (Tariq, 2010). This technique dominates the text of *The Tobacco Keeper* by Ali Bader, who even makes use of the same title as Pessoa’s poem. The interrelated personalities serve to depict the writer’s own overall synchronization with the text.





The other literary technique is called “polyphony,” adopted by Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975). Polyphony means multiple voices. Each of these voices has its own viewpoint, its own validity, and its own narrative influence within the novel. This serves to realise the multi-identities represented in a work, embracing concepts like double consciousness and double personalities. This again can be witnessed in the works included in this research study. Inaam Kachachi’s *The American Granddaughter* (2010) depicts a diasporic character with different attitudes in relation to her Iraqi and American native and host homes. The compound impressions, expressions and memories with other characters from the two homes of Zeina, the main character, enhance the applicability of this technique in the novel. Dramatically speaking, these voices could be of a child witnessing the displacement of her own innocent world and of a young woman trying not to forget her ancestral roots for their colourful, meaningful



and essential role.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Though there has been a considerable amount of scholarly work exploring and tackling postcolonial theory and the concept of double consciousness in Western literature, in general, there has been little concern for Middle Eastern literature, especially that of Iraqi writers. Double consciousness was originally used as a medical concept and subsequently developed as a figurative one and into a theory by Emerson and then W. E. B. Du Bois in his book *The Souls of Black Folk* in (1903) In its figurative sense, it has entered various fields like literature, sociology and psychology.





In literature, many writers, White and Black African Americans, like Toni Morrison, Gloria Naylor, and Hansberry, have come close to this issue in certain works. In Middle Eastern literature, especially novels, the focus has been mainly on postcolonialism and its essential issues rather than the concept of double consciousness. On the other hand, Iraqi literature in the post-2003 era and before has taken significant steps in writing and translating works about similar concerns with no direct reference to the concept of double consciousness in its literary figurative features. At the same time, the implication or inference of double consciousness as a feeling has become the prevailing, overriding case for Iraqi immigrant people, especially after the US invasion in 2003.

The persistent occurrence of the phenomenon of in-betweenness in postcolonial Iraqi society is analogous to what Du Bois has referred to regarding African Americans' feeling of two-ness, duality and warring selves. Still, the selected Iraqi novels, *The American Granddaughter* (2010), *The Tobacco Keeper* (2011), *The Baghdad Eucharist* (2017), and *The Book of Collateral Damage* (2019), have not been studied using the approach employed in this research study. In fact, the reason behind choosing these texts goes to the existence of a relevant theme and a legal translated text into English language. Post-2003 overwhelming themes like exiles, diaspora, hybridism, and the subaltern of minorities are so reflective in them. Otherwise, the other Iraqi relevant novels that have no legal translated copies into English are excluded from this research study.





Issues like, trauma in post-war Iraq, language as a form of displacement, identity of minorities, and exile were those mostly dealt with in the academic works covered in the review of literature. These academic studies lack the direct reference to and application of Du Bois's double consciousness as I employ in considering this concept carefully in the text of the selected Iraqi novels. I seek to specify that Iraqi individuals have this sense of double consciousness in post-2003 contexts under the umbrella theory of postcolonialism and more specifically, its basic related issues like diaspora, hybridism, and the subaltern. This, on the other hand, leads to the examination of the different settings, different characters, and different minorities existing inside Iraq or outside it. The way of resolving those characters will plainly prove what Frantz Fanon (1952) has claimed that the feeling of double consciousness could be manipulated by people other than African Americans.



1.3 Objectives of the Study

- 1- Determine how the concept of double consciousness is embodied in diasporic settings, situations and locations in selected Iraqi novels after 2003.
- 2- Determine and disclose the nature of co-existence in the postcolonial era of hybrid identities in selected post-2003 Iraqi novels.
- 3- Determine the special levels and identifications added to the subaltern characters' identities that suffer from a sense of double consciousness through the selected post-2003 Iraqi novels.





- 4- Reveal the ways of dealing with double consciousness by the tragic protagonists in the selected post-2003 Iraqi novels and whether they ultimately succeed in merging into a third true satisfying self or still suffer from duality.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions of the study are as follows:

- 1- How do the selected post-2003 Iraqi novels reflect double consciousness in diasporic settings?
- 2- How do the selected novels reveal the hybrid identities in post-2003 Iraq?
- 3- How do the subaltern characters feel they are treated in the post-2003 Iraqi novels?
- 4- How do the characters resolve the issue of their identity in the selected post-2003 Iraqi novels?

1.5 Theoretical Framework

Generally, postcolonial theories reflect on international relationships from the earliest to the most recent examples, but are constrained with concern to particular periods of colonial history. Practically, postcolonial theory corresponds to the widespread colonial expansion undertaken in the nineteenth century, mainly by Britain and France (Ramone, 2011). One debate among theorists has been on the whether to use a hyphen or not in the term itself, which has a relation to the accepted position on a historical timeline of the postcolonial moment. Using the selected term, “postcolonialism” rather





than “post colonialism,” implies the need to situate the postcolonial period from the moment of colonization to its following sequences. This is not opposed to the meaning that all cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day should be regarded as postcolonial (Ramone, 2011).

In addition to that, the work of the postcolonial theorists Said, Spivak, and T. Mohanty called for full and equal representation of racial and ethnic minorities in both the political and cultural realms. Therefore, their theories tended instead to concentrate on the negotiated status of representations of those characterized as racialized others (Elliot & Attridge, 2011). Such racialized individuals or groups are known as the subaltern. Agreeing with certain postcolonial theorists, this postcolonial tendency is due to how knowledge is reproduced in literary, historical, philosophical and cultural writings. She indicates that a “native informant figure,” as an individual and position, is one of the main sources behind this knowledge and its reflection in literature. Also, Spivak’s native informant is not generally represented as a positive figure in postcolonial literature, usually having a wider outline of indication due to their hybrid nature (Ramone, 2011).

Edward Said (1993) also comments on this concept of the native informant individual. He points to the fact that this individual emerges as an unworthy figure. An informant must inform on or betray somebody, which is again not accepted by the informant’s own community. On the other hand, Spivak differentiates the native informant in the characteristically original semblance of a servant of colonial ethnography from modern figures who pretend to be native informants but are in fact





“self-marginalizing or self-consolidating” migrant or postcolonial figures (Spivak, 1999) who might be charged with the role of the nativists. Thus, such an informant is the dependent subject of colonialism or of neocolonialism (Ramone, 2011).

All these theoretical explorations of postcolonialism have come across the relevant derivative was a Martinique-born Afro-Caribbean psychiatrist, philosopher revolutionary, and writer, whose works are influential in the fields of “post-colonial” studies, critical theory, and Marxism. He says:

On that day, completely dislocated, unable to be abroad
with the other, the white man, who unmercifully imprisoned
me, I took myself far off from my own presence, far indeed,
and made myself an object. (Fanon, 1952, p. 112)



Referring to himself as “an object” points towards many hidden, instinctive personal feelings, especially for Blacks and other non-White individuals. It locates them away from their actual host home that is supposed to be their semi-local native home. Frantz Fanon’s (1952) critical opinions have something in common with Du Bois’s sociological concept of double consciousness. Fanon’s work shows that this concept can be true to or appropriate as a condition of colonized people in general. Such a connection reveals that the situations or positions of African Americans, and people of color in general, are in at least one way similar to the positions of colonized people (Black, 2007). And this similarity includes Iraqi colonized and displaced individuals.





The connection between double consciousness in the US and colonization, generally, has not yet been fully explored. Du Bois spent a lot of his life combating colonialism in Africa through his writings and the Pan African Conferences, but he never integrated his observation of double consciousness in the US with double consciousness in the rest of the world. Fanon was familiar with some African American writers, but he did not recognize the familiar issue of double consciousness. An article in the *Journal of Black Studies* by Moore (2005), entitled *A Fanonian Perspective on Double Consciousness*, disputes the concept of double consciousness and misses how securely Fanon and Du Bois can be connected. However, double consciousness connects Du Bois and Fanon and relates racism in the US to colonialism, historically (Moore, 2005).



The Fanonian perception of the appropriateness of Du Bois's double consciousness for the rest of the colonized people, in general, other than African Americans, makes it attainable to examine this concept in relation to the diasporic, hybrid, and subaltern displaced Iraqi individuals in different countries. It is especially clear in the reflected cases of certain protagonists in the Iraqi novels after 2003. Accordingly, this research assumes to accomplish a reliable academic study about the application of this concept, double consciousness, on translated Iraqi novels from the last two decades. Besides, most of what has been done before tackles aspects like race, waves of asylum seekers, Arabized Jews, the Anglo-Arab identity construction of Arab-American poetry, creative writings in English by Arab authors or authors of Arab descent, or applying Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogical theory in some of the Iraqi Novels. Other studies relate to a postcolonial reading of Arabic novels, generally.





Consequent to all what has been mentioned earlier, mainly postcolonial theory in relation to the derivative concept of double consciousness characterizes the nature of the topic and the related questions. The concept of 'double consciousness' will be applied on a different ethnic group, the Iraqi diasporic, hybrid and subaltern individuals, and may be justified by reasons other than postcolonial reactions, only. The selected post-2003 translated Iraqi novels, *The Tobacco Keeper*, *The American Granddaughter*, *The Baghdad Eucharist* and *The Book of Collateral Damage*, will be analyzed and discussed to examine their reliability in reflecting the obviousness of the concept of double consciousness in Iraqi novels about displaced Iraqi individuals. So, there may be additions made to or a reshaping of the referred concept since it is shifted to the examination and exploration of a previously under researched cultural group, the Iraqis after 2003.



1.6 Conceptual Framework

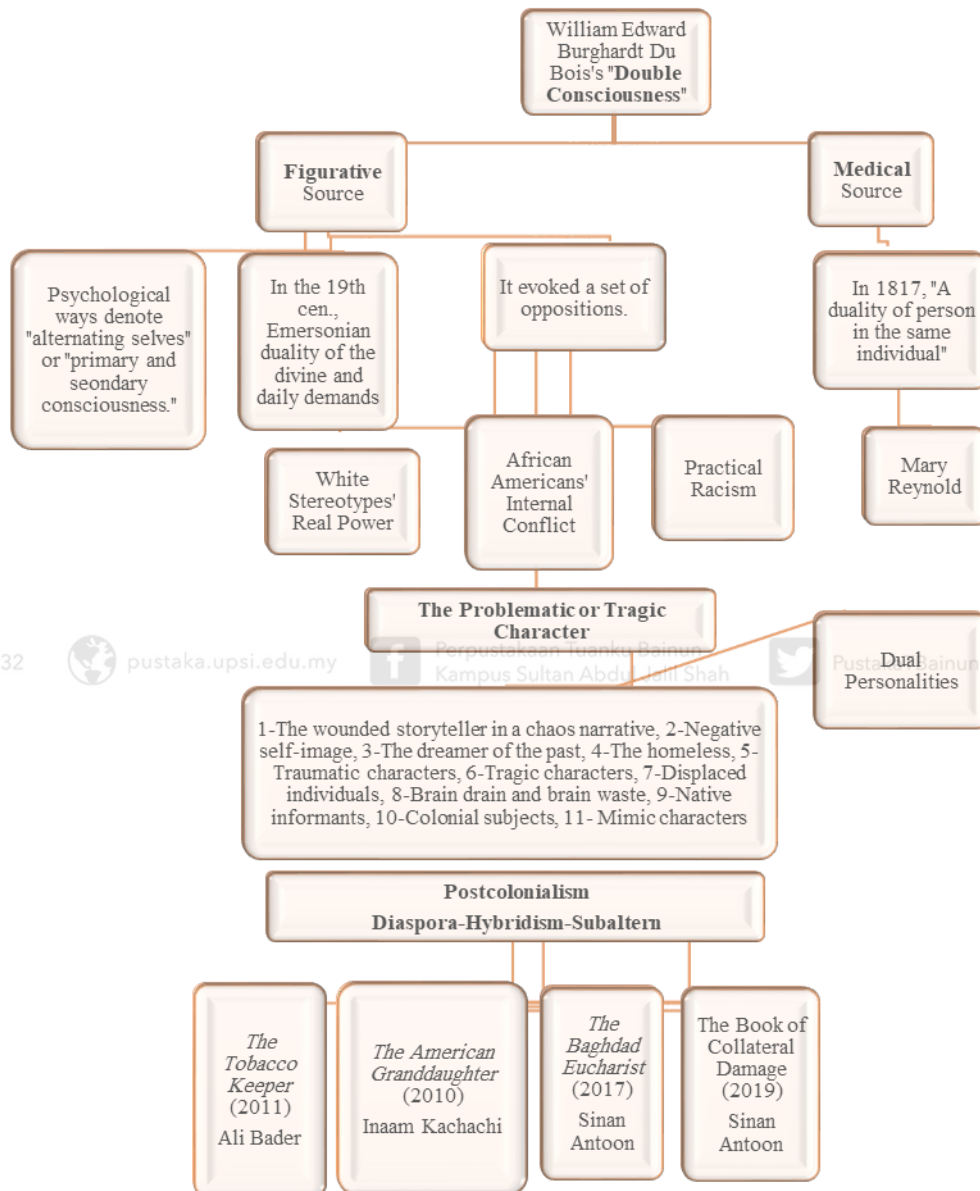


Figure 1.1. Conceptual Framework



1.7 Significance of the Research

This research study is significant in that it meets the need for academic and critical studies on contemporary Iraqi theoretical and literary production to fill the gap in similar references in the literature about it. Most of the academic studies done before have dealt with Arab novels that replicate comparable themes or concepts. But still, the specific point of view concerning Iraqi novels after 2003 that reproduce the sociological concept of double consciousness has not been covered by similar studies in this literary field. In addition to that, the research study tries to demonstrate the corresponding points among certain basic theories and the relevant issues that shape, directly or indirectly, this under researched concept. In the analysis, postcolonial theory, diaspora, hybridism, and the subaltern are overlapped and interrelated to modify the resultant concept of double consciousness in its new application in Iraqi literature. Still, some sub-topics come under the main topics of these theories, like diaspora, hybridism, and subaltern, in relation to displacement, acculturation, and guest and host communities, respectively.

More to the point, migrant literature, as it has recently been termed, among other former terms like “Gastarbeiterliterature,” “Black British Literature” and “new world literature,” is incorporated under postcolonial literature, both of which emerge from the centres of the old empires. According to Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* (1994), the study of world literature might be the study of the way in which cultures identify themselves through their projections of “otherness” (Glesener, 2016). It is stated that the fascination in postcolonial literary studies with migration derives from the fact that the human acts of storytelling and travel are tangled together. In this





respect, postcolonial studies put its claim in the idea that the relationship between narrative and movement takes on a new and qualitatively different significance in the context and aftermath of colonialism (Lazarus, 2004). Moreover, “place” and “displacement” are the main issues of postcolonial literature developed to tackle the postcolonial crisis of “identity” through the relationship between ‘self’ and ‘displacement’. Yet, the digressive practice and the experience of place with the available language to describe it characterize the most classic and persistent features of postcolonial texts (Ashcroft et al., 1989).

In terms of the sequences of this displacement, another form of displacement can be distinguished, which is clearly that of language. In this case, there might be no geographical displacement but an imposed gap resulting from linguistic displacement. It is shared by those who feel alienated in its practice once its vocabulary, categories, and codes are felt to be inadequate to describe the physical and geographical conditions or the cultural practices they have developed in a new land (Ashcroft et al., 1989). Evidently, the novel is the most appropriate storytelling type to reflect the impacts of both postcolonialism and migration on the individual. It generally points to the importance of exploring the real authentic identity of someone living in a dual existence. So, the migrants and their reflected issues in Iraqi novels after 2003 are hypothetically determined to decide the validity of the application of Du Bois’s concept of double consciousness and its derivative subtopics.





1.8 Limitations of the Study

The scope of the time covered here is decided to be after 2003 due to the dramatic invasion on Iraq that has caused a multitude of social, political, and personal issues. Double consciousness has overwhelmed the majority of the novels published after 2003. The argument for this as a research topic is that the concept of double consciousness has not been tackled precisely but rather its parallel issue of identity. Almost all of the studies done before have not mentioned this concept by itself in the Arabic and the Iraqi novels. The mainstream genre of the novels deals with postcolonial theory and its subtopics, except double consciousness, as relevant to the recurrence of colonialism. Ali Bader, Inaam Kachachi, and Sinan Antoon are the selected authors with the respective English translations of their novels *The Tobacco Keeper*, *The American Granddaughter*, *The Book of Collateral Damage*, and *The Baghdad Eucharist*.



1.9 Conclusion

The Iraqi literary texts, exemplified by the novels written and translated after the predicament in 2003, have brought about dynamic fictional modifications analogous to the political, social, and personal changes in Iraq. These novels reflect the factual real-life feedback of displaced Iraqi individuals on outlying host homes. The similarity between their conditions and those of African Americans is an indication of the possibility of relating Du Bois's concept of double consciousness, dedicated originally to African Americans, to Iraqi displaced individuals, hybrid communities, and minorities.





Despite the difference in ethnicity, the Iraqi diaspora represents the group of people whose daily travails abroad have motivated Iraqi writers who have experienced the same circumstances to depict the feeling of double consciousness in their texts. The different cultures in the host homes push those Iraqis to be in between all the time. The theory of double consciousness under the umbrella theory of postcolonialism can resolve the queries of the research study. The four Iraqi novels written and translated after 2003 deal with picturing the sociological reactions of Iraqi individuals, generally, and of Iraqi individuals in exile, particularly. Of course, the relevant Iraqi texts after 2003 that have not been translated could not be chosen for this study. So, with a general survey, other texts are briefly reviewed to enhance the overall judgment on the existence of the underlined concept on this literary field in

Iraqi literature.

