

Love and War in Ahmad Ardalan's the Gardener of Baghdad

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Abstract

*The study sheds light on the importance of love and kindness during the hard times of wars. It aims to clarify that the two opposite concepts of 'love' and 'war' are essential parts of human life which exist in our communities as well as within ourselves. The two concepts are endless, with no limits or boundaries. The study explores the cruelty of wars and political conflicts and their impact on the civilians and their senses through an analytical reading to the historical novel under study Ahmad Ardalan's *The Gardener of Baghdad* (2014). The novel demonstrates the impact of the political conflicts and wars on societies and depicts the characters' suffering, struggle and resilience in the face of oppression and persecution. The study proves that love can be found in conditions of war and survive the trials of time and distance besides killing, destruction and death. The human emotions cannot be repressed or killed even by wars. Love can exist between individuals from different cultures or different races subjugated to political hegemony and persecution. Through love and kindness, the characters could survive their dreadful world whether it was a profound romantic passion or kindness and care granted by certain individuals to the protagonists of the novel. The study builds its theoretical analysis on sociopolitical approach that shows the impact of social and political factors on people concentrating on the global ramifications of World War II on individuals residing in various regions in the world. The study follows the APA writing style, the seventh edition, in formatting and documentation.*

Keywords: Ahmad Ardalan, kindness, love, *The Gardener of Baghdad*, war.

Introduction

“When the power of love overcomes the love of power the world will know peace.”(Jimi Hendrix)

Under the hard political and foggy social circumstances, war and love and any other human emotions examine the kindness of people's essence as well as their strange adherence to kill everything that is innocent. Love and war are always in everlasting conflict, challenge and provocation, but the problem is weaving two or more intertwined threads about which of them must overcome the other. Throughout history the world had seen the devastation of wars and conflicts; from the vast destruction of World War I and World War II to the cruel battles in Afghanistan and the American invasion of Iraq. It is in this world of cruelty that human beings struggle to carry on their lives. They attempt in whatever possible way they find to search for love and beauty amidst the turmoil of their warring countries. Violence and chaos cannot stop people from falling in love, forging romantic relationships or extending care and kindness to each other. The love is wide-

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ranging and includes many kinds of relationships and webs of kinship from family and friendship to the romantic and intimate relationships.

Colonialism

Colonialism may be described as the exercise of dominance by a single power over a subordinate region or population. In practical terms, colonialism refers to the forceful intrusion of one nation into another, when the invading nation establishes dominion over the occupied territory, asserts ownership, and sends individuals, sometimes referred to as "settlers," to inhabit the taken-over area. The aforementioned phenomenon pertains to a process of imposing control, whereby one group is subjected to the authority and dominance of another. Similar to colonialism, imperialism also encompasses the exercise of political and economic dominance over a subordinate region. While colonialism and imperialism are sometimes used interchangeably, it is important to note that they do not possess identical meanings. Imperialism may be described as a collection of policies and behaviors used by a country to expand its authority and impose control over the political, economic, and cultural aspects of other regions. Imperialism may be comprehended as the ideological framework or rationale that promotes colonial endeavors.

The etymology of the word "colony" may be traced back to the ancient Roman concept of "colonia," which denoted a specific sort of settlement established by the Romans. The term "colonist" originates from the Latin word "colon-us," which refers to someone engaged in farming, cultivation, planting, or settling. This term inherently conveys the notions of a farm and a landed estate (Nayar, 2008). The etymology of this term serves as a reminder that the phenomenon of colonialism often included the relocation of individuals to a previously unoccupied region, where they established themselves as enduring inhabitants while retaining their loyalty to their home nation in matters of governance. Frantz Fanon posits that the conventional economic exploitation often associated with colonialism may be effectively perpetuated by a new strategy, namely the ascendancy of the comprador bourgeoisie. This particular faction of the native managerial class forms an alliance with foreign economic interests, so ensuring the continuation of exploitative practices. In addition to this, modern literary theorists have also directed their focus towards the examination of representation techniques that perpetuate a system of subordination, which continues to persist even after former colonies achieve independence.

Postcolonial theory

Postcolonial theory encompasses a literary framework or critical perspective that engages with the analysis of literature originating from nations that have experienced or continue to experience colonial subjugation by other nations. Additionally, it may include literary works produced by individuals from colonial nations or pertaining to colonization and the experiences of colonized populations. This analysis primarily centers on the manner in which literature produced by the colonizing society distorts the lived experiences and the real world of the colonized individuals. Moreover, it perpetuates the notion of the inferiority of the colonized people within the literary works created by the colonized individuals themselves. These literary works aim to articulate the colonized people's sense of self and reclaim their historical narrative, despite the inherent otherness imposed upon them by their past. This phenomenon also encompasses the manner in which literature originating from colonial nations appropriates the linguistic elements, visual representations, settings, customs, and other cultural aspects of colonized nations. The objective of postcolonial literary theory is to challenge and undermine the prevailing colonial discourses and ideas that were imposed on the orient by Western powers, with the intention of establishing an independent and distinct identity.

Furthermore, the theoretical framework is grounded on the fundamental principles of Otherness and resistance. The construction of the identity of colonized individuals has predominantly portrayed them as an unfamiliar and threatening Other. This identity is constantly in flux, as it is both altered and reclaimed, resulting in a hybrid identity. The process of conceiving or reconstructing this identity is associated with complexities and perplexities, as highlighted by Lye (1998). The incorporation of postcolonial theory into the realm of critical analysis emerged throughout the 1970s, with several scholars attributing the seminal work *Orientalism* by Edward Said as its foundational text. The proponents of the idea often analyze the strategies used by authors hailing from colonized nations to express and valorize their cultural identities, while also seeking to recover them from the conquerors. The analysis also includes an exploration of the use of literature by colonial powers to validate colonialism by perpetuating portrayals of the colonized as being of lesser status. Nevertheless, the endeavor to provide a singular definition for postcolonial theory has been met with controversy, prompting several scholars to strongly criticize the whole conceptual framework.

Post-colonialism encompasses the multifaceted and intricate nature of many cultural encounters, including and engaging with all facets of the colonial processes from the first point of contact (Ashcroft et al., 1999b, p. 2). According to Loomba (1998, p. 18), the word 'post-colonial' is often used to describe the process of disengagement from the complex collection of events associated with colonialism. This disengagement may take several forms and is likely unavoidable for individuals whose experiences have been influenced by colonialism. In their work titled *The Empire Writes Back: theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (2001), Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin provide an encompassing definition of the word 'post-colonial' as it pertains to the cultural sphere influenced by the imperial process, spanning from the first colonization period to the contemporary age. According to the source cited (p. 6), the presence of a consistent set of concerns may be attributed to the ongoing historical plan that was set in motion by European imperial aggression. Post-colonialism may be characterized as an ongoing process of resistance and rebuilding, as stated by Ashcroft et al. (1999b, p. 2). Edward Said's seminal work, *Orientalism*, had a significant effect on the development of the area of postcolonial studies. Said used Michel Foucault's method of discourse analysis in his work *Orientalism* to examine the construction of knowledge pertaining to the Middle East. The word "orientalism" refers to a systematic framework of ideas, presumptions, and communicative strategies that were used to generate, analyze, and assess information pertaining to individuals from non-European cultures. Said's approach assisted the scholarly deconstruction of literary and historical materials, enabling a comprehensive understanding of their reflection and reinforcement of the imperialist endeavor. In contrast to prior scholarly investigations that primarily examined the economic or political rationales behind colonialism, Said's work brought forward a crucial emphasis on the interlinked nature of knowledge and power dynamics. Through the deliberate emphasis on the cultural and epistemological implications of imperialism, Said effectively challenged the prevailing notion of knowledge devoid of subjective biases. He demonstrated that the act of comprehending the Orient was intricately intertwined with the objective of imposing dominance over it.

Ahmad Ardalan: The Dentist, Writer and Cancer survivor

Ahmad Ardalan has successfully overcome cancer on two separate occasions. The author's birthplace was Baghdad, Iraq, in 1979. During his early years, at the age of two, he travelled to Vienna, Austria, accompanied by his parents. It was in this city that he spent a significant portion of his formative years and completed his elementary education. Following the completion of his father's diplomatic assignment in late 1989, he subsequently returned to Iraq, where he pursued his academic endeavors and successfully obtained a degree from the University of Dentistry. Due to the unstable political, military,

social, and economic circumstances prevailing in his country of origin, Ahmad made the decision to depart from Iraq and go to the United Arab Emirates.

Following challenges encountered in his pursuit of a profession in dentistry, he made the decision to transition into the realm of commercial employment. The author's formative years spent in a diverse cultural milieu, along with extensive global exploration, fostered a deep-seated enthusiasm for the study of global cultures. This fervor ultimately served as the impetus for the creation of his first literary work, *The Clout of Gen* which was published in June 2012. This novel presented a distinctive mystery narrative infused with elements of science fiction. The narrative revolves on the professional predicament of John Teddy, a journalist employed by a newspaper. In addition to this, the individual's marital relationship has deteriorated, leading to his contemplation of suicide.

Ardalan aimed to alter the perspectives of individuals from Western cultures on his nation by means of his literary works. His professional endeavors and personal lifestyle necessitated extensive global travel, affording him the opportunity to engage with diverse individuals. He mentioned that when he utter the name of Baghdad people only think about wars, killings and blood-shedding. Ardalan decided to change people's views on his country through writing about its greatness and glory. In January 2013, Ahmad made a return to Baghdad after an absence of eleven years, resulting in a visit characterized by a complex interplay of emotions.,

I was forced to leave Baghdad during the war due to security reasons known to all. After eleven years, I made my first visit back to Baghdad on business. The damage, and change in Baghdad was painful. My emotional response was to give back to my beloved hometown by writing a novel about hope and love even in the darkest of times. (Ardalan, 2014,p.138).

Motivated by his visit to Iraq, the author composed his second literary work, titled *The Gardener of Baghdad*, which aimed to broaden readers' perspectives by presenting an alternative portrayal of the city that deviated from their preconceived notions. When questioned on the aesthetic qualities of Baghdad both before and post-conflict, Ardalan said,

Wars have taken its toll on this beautiful city. If you visit Baghdad now, you will see a city that has lost its heart. I can simply compare the city to a beautiful room in castle that has collected dust for decades. It needs special care and dedication to restore what was once there.(Georgiev,2015)

Being asked about the inspiration to choose Diyala as a birth place of the protagonist, Ali, Ardalan mentioned his regular visits to this place "I remember visiting my uncle's farm in Khanaqeen in Diyala and loved the memories I had there running around with my cousins amass orange and lemon trees and spending wonderful times there swimming at their small pool."(A. Ardalan, personal communication, September 2,2023)

Subsequently, the author penned his most recent work, titled *Matt*, which belongs to the genre of Short Story Thriller Series, in the year 2015. Ardalan, imbued with a message of hope and love, published *Baghdad: The Final Gathering*, afterwards followed by *The Boy of the Mosque*. The author's most recent literary work, entitled *The Art Collector of Le Marais*, was motivated by a recent visit to Paris, during which he explored the exquisite galleries located in the Le Marais district.

The Gardener of Baghdad: Historical and Political Background

"This novel speaks about a flower

The true red rose in my life ,

The rose that represents existence, beauty and class.

Baghdad”

With these beautiful and expressive words ,Ardalan starts writing his novel , the story of love, hope and war. The story opens in a bookstore in Baghdad in the contemporary time. Adnan, the owner of the bookshop, expresses anxiety for the well-being of his family among the prevailing social turmoil and political discord. and urged by his wife to sell the store and leave saying that ‘Baghdad isn’t safe’ because of bombings and kidnapping. “In its faded recollections of Baghdad ravaged by wars ,a reader could get a strange sense that memory and history serve as the drive to walk the paths of life.” (Al-Barazengi & Al- Abbasi ,2021 ,p.110)

While dusting his antique books, he finds a hidden hand-written memoir, written during another period of unrest earlier in Iraq’s history. The story is set in 1950s and tells a love story between Ali and Mary and love to Baghdad of old times .The memoir depicts the life of Ali, a young farmer ,his early childhood in Diyala and then his move Baghdad where he became ,with the guidance of an older man and his wife, a famous gardener. Ali, a highly accomplished and talented individual, establishes a renowned enterprise specializing in landscape design. In due course, Ali develops a deep affection for Mary, a youthful and beautiful individual, who happens to be the daughter of a British military officer.. Despite coming from two very different worlds, they fall in love and marry. The memoir was not complete for Ali's tale came to an abrupt conclusion on July 13, 1958, coinciding with the day of the revolution that resulted in the overthrow of Iraq's monarchy..

Adnan successfully finds Ali's old cousin, who was mentioned in the book, and gains further insights into the narrative. However, the cousin ultimately asserts that the fate of Ali during the revolution remains unknown, with the prevailing belief being that he died in a fire. The cousin provides guidance to Adnan on the fate of Ali's widow, who happens to be the daughter of the general and now resides in the United Kingdom. After perusing the document independently, she travels back to Baghdad in order to express her gratitude to Adnan for securing the delivery of Ali's text. Subsequently, on their journey towards a nearby hotel to partake in a midday meal, they coincidentally encounter Ali, who, although not having died , has subsequently had a prolonged period of memory loss.

The Gardener of Baghdad provides a specific account of how life goes on in a period of war, and how people coped to be fully living or dying because they are bewildered between life and death. This unstable condition and out-of -will choices are connected romantically with a love story set between 1955 and 1958, between an Iraqi gay and the daughter of a British general, Mary. (Al-Barazengi & Al- Abbasi ,2021,p.111)

During World War I, the British Empire took control of Iraq from the Ottoman Empire. Subsequently, in 1920, the League of Nations awarded Britain a mandate to administer and rule the country. In 1921, a Hashemite monarchy was established with the support of the British, and subsequently, on October 3, 1932, the kingdom of Iraq was bestowed with its freedom. The Iraqi government fostered strong economic and military alliances with Britain, resulting in many instances of anti-British uprisings. In 1941, a pro-Axis uprising occurred, prompting a military intervention by the British forces. Consequently, the Iraqi government subsequently reached an agreement to provide assistance to the Allied war effort. In the year 1958, the monarchy was deposed, leading to a subsequent two-decade period during which Iraq was governed by a succession of military and civilian administrations.

Nuri al-Said, the man largely responsible for authoring the 1930 pact, held the position of prime minister at the onset of World War I. Due to his conviction that the Anglo-Iraqi alliance was the most effective safeguard for Iraqi security, he expressed a

desire to initiate hostilities against Germany. However, his advisors counseled exercising caution, given the uncertain prospects of a British triumph at that time. The prime minister subsequently announced that Iraq would no longer engage in hostilities and terminated diplomatic ties with Germany. During the height of World War II, there was a noticeable increase in the political involvement of liberal and moderate parties inside Iraq. The involvement of the United States and the Soviet Union in the conflict, together with their pronouncements in support of democratic freedoms, significantly enhanced the standing of democratic groups inside Iraq. People endured despite limitations and governmental restrictions that limited individual freedoms and press liberties, placing their faith in the post-war era to provide promised improvements in quality of life. Despite the emergence of a new societal mindset, the government shown a lack of responsiveness and failed to acknowledge this shift. Consequently, the rules and limitations that were implemented during the wartime period persisted even after the end of hostilities. In 1945, the regent, Abd al-Ilāh, held a meeting with the nation's leaders and delivered a speech wherein he attributed the prevailing popular discontent to the lack of an authentic parliamentary system. He advocated for the establishment of political parties and pledged unrestricted autonomy for their operations, along with the implementation of social and economic changes.

In 1946, with the establishment of political parties and the subsequent abolition of certain rules, a notable resistance emerged among senior politicians and firmly established interests. The newly formed administration, which came into power in January 1946, saw an abrupt fall few months after its establishment. Following his appointment as prime minister, Nuri al-Said endeavored to secure the collaboration of various political groups. However, the general elections conducted under his government's oversight exhibited no noticeable deviation from the pattern of prior regulated elections. The elections were opposed by the parties. In March 1947, Nuri al-Said submitted his resignation, leading to the formation of a new administration under Ṣāliḥ Jabr. Jabr faced opposition from some factions with liberal and nationalist inclinations, who expressed dissatisfaction due to their previous unfavorable experiences during his time as the minister of interior during the war. The most detrimental action undertaken by him was his endeavor to substitute the Anglo-Iraqi treaty of 1930, without engaging in consultation with Iraqi officials. Jabr engaged in discussions with the United Kingdom with the aim of strengthening his personal standing. Upon discovering Britain's desire to maintain authority over its air bases in Iraq, he strongly advocated for Britain's acceptance of the notion of Iraqi dominion over these sites. He proposed that Iraq would provide permission for Britain to use them alone in the event of a conflict. In the event that Britain rejected his suggestions, he issued a threat to quit. With this comprehension in mind, Jabr embarked on a journey to London in the early months of 1948 with the purpose of engaging in negotiations for a new treaty. A quick agreement was reached between him and Ernest Bevin, the British foreign secretary, leading to the signing of a treaty with a duration of 20 years in Portsmouth on January 15, 1948. The agreement facilitated the establishment of a fresh alliance between Iraq and Britain, founded upon principles of equality and full sovereignty. It mandated that both parties commit to refraining from adopting foreign policies that contradict the alliance or potentially pose challenges for the other party. This contract aimed to establish a more advanced version of the 1930 treaty, with the objective of forming an alliance based on shared interests. Notwithstanding these advancements, the pact was promptly rejected in a widespread revolt. Prior to the signing of the treaty, street rallies had taken place in support of Arab rights in Palestine. However, with the announcement of the treaty's signature in London, riots and demonstrations proceeded in Baghdad. Shortly after the signing took place, the regent convened a gathering in the royal residence, which was attended by leaders from different age groups. Following careful consideration and discussion, the decision was made to reject the deal. Jabr subsequently went to Baghdad in an attempt to save his position, although his efforts proved to be futile. The frequency of rioting and protests

escalated, ultimately resulting in the resignation of Jabr. The controversy persisted after to the rejection of the pact. Under the leadership of Nuri al-Said, the more senior politicians regained their positions of authority.

Due to its inability to enact meaningful reforms within its corrupt political framework, along with its entanglement in Cold War politics and the internal struggle between Pan-Arabism and Communism, the monarchy, along with its constitutional governance structure, was swiftly overthrown and replaced by of a republican style of government. The 1958 Revolution, while first started as a coup by a limited faction of military commanders with varying political orientations, gained widespread acceptance from the majority of sectors and political factions present in Iraqi society. In spite of the nation's tangible advancements, the monarchy was unable to garner popular support, particularly lacking the trust of the younger generation. Prior to the revolution, Iraq was characterized by an absence of intelligent leadership, which hindered the nation's ability to achieve development and inspire popular trust. The emerging cohort of leaders shown considerable potential for effective governance, although encountered resistance from their predecessors who pursued a controversial foreign policy agenda. This included forging an alliance with Britain via active involvement in the Baghdad Pact, as well as expressing opposition towards the formation of the United Arab Republic by Egypt and Syria, a stance that proved unpopular among citizens.

The difficulty of power getting among younger citizens has raised concerns among a faction of young military officers who, according to the principles of military discipline that prohibit political involvement, identified themselves as the Free Officers. They initiated the formation of small organizations and devised revolutionary strategies. The Central Organization consisted of a total of fourteen officers, with Abd al-Kareem Qasim serving as the highest-ranking member within the organization. On the 14th of July, the revolutionary forces successfully seized control of the capital city, therefore announcing the end of the monarchy and establishing a republican form of government. The prominent individuals belonging to the royal family, including the monarch and the crown prince, were subjected to capital punishment, resulting in their execution. Additionally, Nuri al-Said met his doom in death. Qasim, the leader of the revolutionary faction, established a governing body known as a cabinet, in which he assumed the role of presiding authority. Additionally, he designated himself as the commander-in-chief of the country's armed forces. Additionally, he undertook the responsibility of defense minister and designated Arif as the minister of the interior and deputy commander of the national forces. The proposed system included the establishment of a Council of Sovereignty, consisting of three individuals, who would collectively serve as head of state. The provisional constitution of Iraq stated that the nation is an inseparable component of the Arab nation, emphasizing the partnership between Arabs and Kurds inside the country. The establishment of Iraq as a republic and the designation of Islam as the official religion resulted in the consolidation of administrative and legislative authority under the Sovereignty Council and the cabinet. Subsequently, it became evident that Qasim held authority, strengthened by the support of the military. In February 1963, a rebellion occurred inside the army, led by a section that collaborated with an Arab nationalist organisation known as the Iraqi regional branch of the Arab Socialist Baath Party. As a consequence of this uprising, the regime rapidly collapsed, resulting in the execution of Qasim.

Love and Kindness in The Gardener of Baghdad

The Gardener of Baghdad is a historical novel set during the dark times of Baghdad in the fifties as well as the present time after the American invasion in 2003. The novelist uses a story within a story technique to depict the suffering of Iraqi people then and now and their struggle to live peacefully. Ardalan ,by writing this novel, raises his voice to stop

violence and destruction in his city reminding people of the prolonged wars and conflicts that destined Baghdad to live in misery. *The Gardener of Baghdad* starts with Adnan, the owner of a book store, brushing the scattered window glass after a roadside bomb explosion. Just then, Adnan considered his wife's demand and advice to leave the country:

Baghdad wasn't safe anymore; it hadn't been since day the regime had changed. Not a day went by without casualties anymore, and bombs, kidnappings, and shootings were rampant. It wasn't the Iraq Adnan used to live in, the place where people could at least feel safe living with their families. The worst part about it was that the bombings and continuous conflict seemed to be for no reason, and things were just getting worse. (Ardalan, 2014, P.6)

Adnan wished to live in a safe and peaceful place, free of wars. Unfortunately, he realized that Baghdad might need decades to calm down and establish peace. After the last explosion, he made his mind '*That's it. This bomb was the last straw*, he decided'. (p.7) He remained at the store that evening and began reorganizing the books, placing them in the appropriate places. What really pained him was selling his father's private collection of books, the masterpieces. He considered these books as treasures 'Nevertheless, they deserved to be dusted, for they were hidden gems' (p.8) After dusting for two hours, he found a golden pendant with a letter inside an old book. On one side of the locket was a black and white photo of a beautiful young woman while on the other side engraved the letters M&A representing the names of Mary and Ali. The first lines of the letter were

I have a feeling things won't go well when we return to Baghdad tomorrow..." I am writing this so my beautiful daughter knows the sacrifices her mother and I have made in the name of our love. If I'm not there to tell my daughter who her father is, this will help her a lot—or at least I hope so. (Ardalan, 2014, p.10)

Through the memoir, the novel tells a romantic story between an Iraqi gardener and a British General's daughter. The romantic story is set in the fifties, the golden time, of Baghdad. 'The allure of the story was so powerful, for it had transported him to a long-forgotten era in Baghdad, before there was so much turmoil and political unrest tearing the people's lives and the scenic city apart'. (P.24)

In the narrative, Ali who represented the majority of Iraqi people underwent the poverty, lack of educational opportunities, unemployment and other bad living conditions. Ali loved reading books from which he could get comfort, power and strength to cope with difficulties of life. He believed that the best way to fight oppression was through reading, working and leaving the change to be achieved by politicians and figureheads of the country. Ali's belief in the significance of books did not involve only reading but also through writing. Feeling that his life was in danger after he decided to accompany Mary to Baghdad to get medical care, he started writing his memoir as a farewell letter to his daughter, little Laila. This memoir served as a vital key factor to recognize the great love story between Ali and Mary many decades later. Adnan's love for books, his passion for reading and his insistence to know the rest of the story helped Ali to recognize his true identity as the gardener of Baghdad.

The Gardener of Baghdad tells the story of Ali, a young farmer from Diyala, who comes to meet Mr. Radhi in Baghdad, the man who adopts and supports him considering him as his son. Ali was traumatized as a child after the death of his parents which ended his joy and happiness, 'It was a lovely, peaceful life till, out of nowhere, a tragedy hit.' (Ardalan, p.11) He finished his primary study although the school was far away from their village because of his father's insistence who considered learning a priority. Unfortunately, after the death of his parents, he dropped out school since he had no desire in education. He dedicated himself to work in the family farms with his cousin, Mustafa.

Life's difficulties stole the happiest moments of their lives and made them hold responsibilities of men, 'I always told Mustafa we had a short-lived childhood, and we were men before our time.'(p.11) His feeling of loneliness increased when his cousin and best friend ,Mustafa traveled to Basra. Ali found comfort and solace in reading books, 'For hours at night ,I read in the warm glow of the candle next to my bed ,and waking up every morning with a book in my hand became normal.'(p.14)

One day, at the age of fourteen, Ali's life had changed completely when he met Mr. Radhi in one of the markets in Baghdad. He was very impressed with Mr. Radhi's personality and manners of speaking as he was talking with a British gentleman in English fluently. Mr. Radhi was very kind with Ali since the first moment he met him. He urged Ali to master Arabic before he learn English and to read books as much as he could. He also brought Ali some books in English as well as an encyclopedia about plants and farming as he knew Ali's main interest and passion was gardening. The novelist portrays the kindness and care of Mr. Radhi and Madam Laila with Ali. They treated him very kindly considering him as their only son. Mr. Radhi helped him in building his home and the plant nursery to be the best gardener in Baghdad. After many years of studying and working hard, he comes to be the most successful and famous gardener in Baghdad that he was chosen to design the square where the meeting of the Baghdad Pact Assembly was held. Ali was very grateful for the love ,care and support of his foster parents without whom he could not be able to succeed in his life and even survive.

In *The Gardener of Baghdad* ,a sweet romance flourished between Ali and Mary. It was a great love that could overcome all the obstacles and survive crossing all the boundaries that separate the two cultures. while most people were concerned about the political and social change ,the protagonists Ali and Mary were much interested in planting roses and decorating the beautiful gardens. Mary Although her father was a General in the British Army, Mary did not care for politics and was fond of planting roses as well as reading poetry. Ali was not interested in politics at all and he did not participate in protests and demonstration held by the majority of his people against the government and the colonial rule. His main concern was to live a normal life happily with his family members and friends. At the party that he held, he had the opportunity to sit with Mary privately away from the party place. For his astonishment, before uttering a word ,Mary spoke first and told him "Ali, if you promise me that you'll never hurt me, shout at me, or leave me alone—if you'll promise that you'll always love me—I-I will be yours (p.54).Her words shocked him and left him speechless. Then ,he promised to do the best he could to make her happy ,but also said

It will be very difficult for us to be together, and most of the world and the people we know will be against us. I'm willing to fight the world for you, Mary, but you have to know it is not going to be easy. The rosebush of our relationship will be very, very beautiful, but it will also come with thorns.(P. 55)

After that ,they started to meet regularly and almost secretly either in his nursery or in the crowded market with a constant fear of being seen and caught. Mary loved Ali so much that one day she surprised him speaking Arabic very well. She spent eight weeks in studying Arabic ,four hours a day in order to communicate with Ali in his mother tongue ,thinking it unfair to speak just in her language, English. Ali had a strong relationship with Mary with whom he felt in love since the first sight. Like Ali, Mary's mother is dead and her father is always busy in military service

Much like me, Mary was a broken soul, a person who longed for the care she'd missed out on when she'd lost her mother at an early age to death and had lost her father to his military commitments. It was somewhat similar to my story, so we were connected in that way, and I understood how she felt.(Ardalan, 2014, p.60)

Mary's mother died when she was only six years old and since then, Miss Nassema took care of her like her daughter. Ali's relationship with Mary started on the day Mary and Miss Nassema went to the nursery and asked him to change and update their garden. Miss Nassema and Mr. Dalton, the man in charge of the Thompson's household, told him that the main reason why they wanted him to renovate the gardens was to satisfy Mary's wishes. During his regular visits to the general's house to check on the roses of the garden, Ali had the opportunity to talk to Mary more and bond his relationship with her. Ali decided to make a party at his home and invite his loyal customers, including of course the Thompson's family in order to tell Mary about his true feelings towards her. All the attendants of the party were the elite of Baghdad.

In spite of their carefree life, Ali and Mary were forcibly involved in conflicts and confrontations out of the political situations in Iraq. Once Mary's father knew about the romantic relationship between his daughter and Ali, he decided to take revenge and hurt the latter. Mr. Thompson did not only hurt Ali but even Mary whom he tortured her violently. *The Gardener of Baghdad* also depicts metaphorically the nightmares of war, conflicts and persecution that Ali and Mary underwent. During those hard times, love and kindness played a vital role to help the lovers get married and escape leaving Baghdad to a different remote place where they could find peace and happiness. Mr. Dalton and Miss Nassema made a plan to save Mary's life and Ali's family and relatives helped him to escape from the police station and leave to Kurdistan. Without the help and support of those kind hearted people, Ali and Mary could not survive and make a family.

Mr. Radhi and Madam Laila had only one child who died out of fever at the age of just five years. Ali learned that the name of their dead son, coincidentally, the same as his, Ali. Madam Laila was the second mother to Ali for whom he was telling his secrets and his feelings. Even when he told her about his decision to get married with Mary, she hugged him and supported him in spite of the others' opposition and told him

As much as I agree with all those who have advised you before that this might be a mistake, something too risky and complicated, I see the happiness dancing in your eyes whenever you mention her, Ali. I know a feeling like that only comes once in a lifetime, and I think you should follow your heart's desires. I believe in love, and I know love conquers all. (Ardalan, 2014, ps 36 -37)

The other influential characters in the story who helped and took care of Ali were the Kurdish family in Sulaymaniya who gave him protection and safety. Kaka Hawazin introduced his family to Ali 'This is my wife Fatema Khan, and my daughter –in –law, Sayran,' he said, "and from this day on, we are your family." (95) All of them were very kind, patient and helpful. Kaka Hawazin and his wife treated Ali as their son who started working with the livestock as a partner. 'Kaka Hawazin's wife, Madam Fatema, didn't speak Arabic very well, but I understood her well enough, and her kindness cut through any language barrier.' (96) Even Mary learned to cook and knit with the help and teaching of Madam Fatima and Sayran. The whole family were so loving that it did not take long for Ali and Mary to adapt to their life.

After reading these details about the Iraqi situation at that time, Adnan stopped reading and laughed sarcastically with a deep sadness inside his heart. He looked at the streets of Baghdad wondering why his beloved city is destined for suffering and misery for many decades hoping that one day it would find peace for the coming generations

Ah, my fair city, it has always been the same for you, hasn't it? Even in that era, when Ali was making your gardens beautiful, you could not find peace. Even then, you were divided. Will this ever end? Will the people of Iraq ever be united so there can be real beauty in our world? (p. 56)

When the political situation in Iraq became unstable and dangerous especially for the British, Ali intended to go to the foreigners' compound to meet Mary. When he knew that she refused to leave Iraq for the sake of Ali, he talked with her privately and persuaded her to leave immediately. After three weeks, Ali received a letter from Mary telling him about her sadness being separated from him and her feeling of loneliness without him. With the encouragement of Miss Nassema, she took poetry classes at a London University to distract her from thinking of him. Unfortunately, all her efforts were useless, as she mentioned in her letter to Ali 'It isn't helping, Ali, because even though I love poetry and love to learn, the last thing I remember before going to sleep every night is that I'm too far away from the source of my happiness.' (p.70) After the second letter he got from her explaining her ongoing misery and loneliness, Ali decided to make a short visit to London to make the best holiday surprise for Mary before Christmas. He asked one of Mustafa's gold crafters to make a pendant as a gift for Mary with two emerald stones representing Mary's green eyes. There was also a place in the pendant where he put her own photograph, the one she had given him before leaving Baghdad. Mary also made him an amazing surprise that he never expected. She gave him a little book inside which she kept all the roses Ali had given her or thrown on her balcony in Baghdad. They were dried and carefully preserved. Each page of the book contained a rose on the top with an inscription below it indicating the date she got them. Mary was ready to return to Baghdad regardless of the unstable political situation there only to be with Ali 'There's no one to stop me from returning to Baghdad, Ali. Seeing you again has given me all the energy and the desire to finish my studies here, and then I'll go back to where I belong – with you.' (82)

Humans tend to be loyal to those that they love. When a person is devoted to someone else they will go to the lengths of giving up their own values for another they find as a priority. In *The Gardener of Baghdad*, the author emphasizes the value of sacrifice and loyalty which usually comes with love and friendship. *The Gardener of Baghdad* depicts great sacrifices especially those made by Ali in the name of love. He fell in love with the beautiful Mary from the first sight when he met her in his plant nursery. His first act of loyalty and sacrifice came before even getting married, when he was arrested and knew later that her father and his body guard were behind his trouble. He was asked many times by the Major if there were personal matters with those witnesses. Ali being worried about Mary and not wanting to cause her any hurt, he refused to tell the truth. He preferred to be imprisoned and tortured than causing any pain to Mary.

It was Mustafa's loyalty that rescued Ali. The faithful cousin, Mustafa came to the police station and saved his life by telling Major Amin the truth. The latter set Ali free and promised Mr. Radhi that he would delay the British transport till Ali escape and leave Baghdad to the North. Ali knew that the Major was a kind man who believed inside himself that Ali was innocent but he needed an evidence, "He wanted to help me and didn't like being on the wrong side of honesty and justice, and he wasn't afraid to fight the system when he knew they were doing wrong." (p.91) Mr. Radhi helped Ali in getting married with Mary in the courthouse secretly with Miss Nassema and Mr. Dalton as witnesses for the marriage. Ali knew that Charles had seen him walking with Mary hand in hand at the Alwiyah club, so he became furious and told the general who hit her severely. She was rescued by the kind people, Miss Nassema and Mr. Dalton who gave her a ride to Mr. Radhi's house. Without the kindness and sacrifices made by those people, Ali and Mary's lives would be in danger.

Mr. Radhi gave Ali a letter with the address of an old friend he trusted with his life named as Kaka Hawazin in Sulaymaniyah. Kaka Hawazin was a very kind man who welcomed Ali warmly saying "Any son of Mr. Radhi's is a son of mine." (95) Ali knew that Kaka Hawazin was working for Mr. Radhi's father in Baghdad all his life but when he wanted to marry and return to his home in Sulaymaniya, Mr. Radhi generously

helped him to start a new life with his bride by giving him the money he needed. Since then he had been raising livestock through which he made a good wealth. When Kaka Hawazin knew that Ali was a fugitive from the law ,he was ready to risk his life and protect him ‘you and your beautiful bride needn’t go anywhere until everything calm down.’ (95) When Mary was giving birth, It was with the help of Kaka Hawazin who could forge some documents and identification for Mary to be admitted to hospital. She gave birth to a daughter child whom he named on Madam Laila's namesake. Ali was so happy most because Mary was with the caring and kind women, Madam Fatema and Sayran. “They were so kind to her and treated her like a queen, and there wasn't a thing she needed that wasn't provided; she never had to ask twice.”

Ardalan portrays the great suffering of people in Iraq in the fifties because the majority of people were angry with the British influence in the country fearing that Iraq might lose its Arabic identify. Almost every day, there were demonstrations held by teachers, students and even farmers protesting against the bad living conditions. The people were furious and strikes and protests broke out everywhere ,at schools and universities and in the streets. At that time, Iraq was unstable , some people were content with the Royal family and the prime minister Nuri Al Said, while others, the nationalists, communists or the Baathists were not. They accused the government to be loyal to the British and lacks the Arab Nationalism, far away from the willing of people. The Iraqi political situation had escalated because of war on Egypt. On October 29,1956, when Egypt was attacked by Israel after the nationalization of the Sues Canal, France and Britain threatened Egypt and the Iraqi government sided with them. Nuri Pasha, as expected, ignored the people's desire "He was clearly on the side of the British, turning his back on Egypt and the entire Arab World.’(69) as a consequence, the streets were on fire ,turmoil and chaos boiled up in the country. There were even armed attacks on British soldiers on their way to Al Habbaniya Air Base causing death to some of them.

Amid this chaos, Ali’s love story was flourishing and his main concern was Mary’s safety, so he went to the foreigners’ compound to meet Mary and persuade her to leave Iraq because he was worried about her :

It is not safe to stay here, and your father is right in saying you should take your leave while you still can. The Iraqi people are angry, and they will release that fiery anger on anyone whom they feel represents the war on Egypt. I know you have nothing to do with all of this ,but because you are British ,you will be in danger if you stay. (Ardalan,2014,p.68-69)

Ali and Mary had to suffer for the sake of getting married and being together. Both of them were forced to leave their families and everything they loved in Baghdad to escape to the North of Iraq. In Sulaiymaniya, they could not leave Kaka Hawazin's home fearing that they might be seen or caught. Ali was considered a fugitive from the law, being accused of kidnapping a British young woman. They spent a very good time together with the new kind family. After a month staying in Sulaiymaniya, Ali received a visit from Mr. Radhi and Mustafa. They were very pleased to see each other again. Mr. Radhi told him that the British thought that he had fled the country to Turkey or Syria, but he should be careful because there can be spies anywhere. Ali and Mary somewhat felt lonely since they could not contact with other people nor could go anywhere “We were isolated from society ,from the whole world ,in fact ,and we hadn’t left Kaka’s property in over two months ,but we were happy ,and we had each other.” (p.100)

Three months passed since Ali and Mary arrived at Sulaiymaniya and had never left Kaka Hawazin's property. The latter told them they could go to the market and see the city but they should be careful. Kaka Hawazin had already people that his friends from the southern Iraq had come to live with them. He chose another name for Ali, the same name that Mary and Miss Nassema chose for him when he visited them in England, Omar. Ali was forced to change his identity twice, once during his visit to London and the

other time in Kurdistan both of which due to his fear from being caught and hurt. They were very happy to be around people again. Mary made Ali a wonderful surprise when she told him about her pregnancy. He could not describe his happiness "I adored Mary with all my heart and soul, but at that moment, my heart soared to heights I never thought existed, as if my love had no limits at all."

The Gardener of Baghdad demonstrates that loving and kindness may have consequences and can put people in danger. The grievance and the main consequences result from the love story of Ali and Mary which put their lives as well as those around them in danger. Ali already realized that his relationship with Mary would change their lives forever. He was aware of the differences between him and Mary as well as the dangers and obstacles he might face:

Mary and I were from entirely different worlds, cultures, and status. Even the simplest of things would be complicated for us. I wouldn't be able to get into the compound without an invitation. In that way, even in my own country, I was an outsider. Furthermore, I couldn't even imagine what a scandal and rumor mill such a relationship would cause in the community. On the other hand, I already deeply loved Mary, and I knew I had to overcome all obstacles to have her in my life.(Ardalan,2014,p.42)

The quote above is very important for it conveys the real picture of the Iraqi people at the time of British Colonialism. Ali was aware that he was like a stranger inside his country who could not enter the foreigners 'compound without an invitation'. This quote compares the luxurious lives of the British people in their own compounding with the miserable condition of the majority of Iraqi people. Those foreigners ,with the support of the Iraqi government, stole the resources of the country for their own benefits. According to postcolonial theory ,the identity of the colonized people are considered as strange and dangerous Other. All of Ali's relatives warned him from approaching Mary and thinking about her especially Mr. Radhi who gave him a golden advice in a long conversation with his word not to repeat it again whether he accepted it or not:

No matter what you decide, you know I will be on your side and will support you. But there are borders in life, Ali. No matter the temptation, no matter how right and wonderful it might seem to cross those borders, they should never be crossed. This Mary, my son, is a red line, a border you should not ignore..... . You and this Mary are from entirely different worlds, something you are too young to understand and powerless to face. Life isn't fair, Ali. As much as we want it to, equality has never and never will exist. If you go forward with pursuing this girl, the path will be hard for you. They are foreigners, and they will not be here forever. They know nothing of our daily lives. We are not the same. Someday, if things get serious on the political or social front, you might see what I mean. Maybe then the blinkers will come off and you will see the true colors of the world. Deep down inside, we don't look at each other the same way. We differ in culture, social habits, beliefs, and, most importantly, politics. Her father is a general, Ali. You cannot go after a Royal Guard general's daughter and expect your people to support you. (p30-31)

Mustafa became very angry and furious when Ali told him about his feelings and final decision and also advised him not to go far in this wrong relationship. What astonished Ali most was the advice or warning made by one of Thompson's household members. Nassema who cared most for Mary and her happiness also had a similar point of view towards this relationship:

I know you're an honorable man, but don't forget who she is and who her father is. You're an Iraqi, and they will never let the two of you be

together. You should put this out of your mind and forget about it, or it will just be more painful for everyone in the long run.(P.42)

In spite of all the warnings and advices he heard, he made his choice to marry his beloved even if it meant to fight against the whole world. Once he decided to get married with her ,he put his life in danger. Ali used to meet Mary nearly every Tuesday at the Alwiyah club, ‘a social club established by the British Embassy in 1924’(87).That day was the hardest for Ali for after returning to his nursery, he was arrested by the British military and the Iraqi police. He was accused of being connected with doctor Kamal ,the communist, and being a part of his cell. Ali acknowledged that he knew Dr. Kamal and even invited him once to his party with the most famous personalities in Baghdad ,but he had nothing to do with him. Ali also remembered the last meeting with him at the café when he talked about his intention to arrange secret meetings with the members of the communist party. Dr. Kamal talked about how the poor people are starving and struggling to survive with no efforts from the government or the Parliament to change reality ‘It’s time for a change in our country. Royalty is no longer a feasible option.’(64) Ali was not interested in politics “ I was a man of plants and trees and flowers, not of politics, and while I knew there was instability in the country, I didn’t believe it was my role to do anything about it.” (64) He asked Dr. Kamal not to talk to him in that matter again and left. Ali was shocked when Major Amin ,the head of the station ,informed him that his nursery will be closed and he had to be transferred to Al Habbaniya for more investigations:

Witnesses have come forward to testify and provide details. These testimonies mention your direct involvement with Dr. Kamal, a man believed to be behind several skirmishes and incidents of political unrest in Baghdad and elsewhere. The British have been searching for the suspected communist for weeks now, as he is being blamed for an incident that resulted in several casualties of their soldiers a few weeks ago.and you are now considered a threat to the national security of this country and all of Britain. (Ardalan,2014,p.90)

Ali became furious and asked the major about the identity of those witnesses pounding his fist on the table ‘..... though not nearly the brute force that the British soldier had used; his hands had been hardened by war ,while mine were still soft from rose petals and soil.’(90) For his astonishment ,Major Amin told him that the witnesses are military officers of great reputation in the British military, General Thompson and Lieutenant Charles. Ali’s worst suspicions had come true ,all of these problems caused by Charles out of his animosity and his desire to revenge against Ali.

Ali did not only endanger his life ,but all the people he loved and worked with. Mustafa said that he was taken with Mr. Radhi in for questioning. They kept him for several day before they release him while Mr. Radhi was kept only for a few hours . They dragged each person Ali was in contact with ,even the workers in his nursery and those he played dominos with in the café. When the British troops arrived at the police station to transport Ali, they had been informed by Major Amin that Ali had escaped during the night. When Miss Nassema and Mr. Dalton told the general that Mary was missing ,he became furious and accused Ali of kidnapping her. Mustafa said that the British military and the Iraqi police were on high alert and the tight security stretched from Baghdad to all the other cities ,“Can you believe they even searched our family farm in Diyala?”(98) Even after months of Ali and Mary’s missing ,the military and police men did not stop searching and investigations. Mustafa and his old father had been taken in many times for questioning about Ali’s place ,but of course they would sacrifice themselves for the sake of him.

Ali’s stubbornness was not limited to getting married with a woman whose religion ,culture and society are totally different from his but he insisted on taking her back to

Baghdad when she felt ill. After giving birth, Mary fell very ill for the cesarean section did not heal properly. Ali sent a letter to Mr. Radhi telling him about the urgent case. After a few days, and for the first time Mr. Radhi, Madam Laila, Mustafa, Ali's uncle, Miss Nassema and Mr. Dalton were all together again. It was the happiest gathering in Ali and Mary's lives. The men started to discuss the situation and all of them agreed that Mary should be taken to Baghdad to get a medical treatment but without Ali. The latter was very worried about Mary's health and insisted on going with her, "I have caused all these troubles for her, and I must accompany my wife in Baghdad." (105) Mr. Radhi warned from leaving his place and approaching Baghdad, "Mary is the general's daughter, and no one would dare harm her, but there is great danger for you if you step foot in Baghdad" (105) Mustafa also had the same opinion and reminded Ali that there was an official warrant against him and he would be arrested since they consider him a threat to the national and foreign security. Ali, being hard-headed, did not change his mind and told them "I could not stand idly by and watch her illness worsen, and I refused to see her suffer any longer just because I needed to stay in hiding." (106) They agreed that Mr. Radhi would talk to the general about the possibility of providing the medical treatment for Mary and guarantee for Ali's safety. After saying goodbye to everyone, Ali pulled Mr. Radhi aside and thanked him for his help and never ending support for him, asking him a last favor "please promise me that if anything bad happens to me, you'll look after my Mary and little Laila." (106) Mr. Radhi affirmed that he would do his best to protect them "You have my solemn oath that no harm will come to them as long as I can do anything to stop it." (106)

A few days later, Mr. Radhi sent Ali a letter informing him that the general would send Mary back to England and would be taken care of very well. Concerning Ali, he should show up in court and justice should be served according to the law and after that he would draw the case and pardon him on condition that Ali would not mention anything about the marriage. Ali, his sick wife and Mustafa reached the foreigners' compound, the security were ready to take Ali with them for questioning. Mr. Dalton told them that he heard Charles talking to one of the British soldiers that he would kill Ali before reaching the police station. For this reason, Mustafa could not leave Ali and insisted on going with him. Before leaving, Ali and Mary said goodbye to each other. Mary could get close to him and gave him the golden locket but he couldn't give her the memoir book he wrote it to his daughter because the guards pulled him away. He intended to give her the valuable notebook that Adnan found in his store after fifty years.

There were two police cars outside to take Ali to the station. Charles got in the front seat of the car riding Ali to the station and Mustafa sat with Ali in the back. Inside the second car, there were four police officers guarding the first one. Suddenly, as soon as the car reached the crowd city center, Charles pulled his gun and tried to kill Ali saying "you humiliated me when you kicked me out of that party and stole Mary away from me, and now it is time to pay you back" (122) Charles wanted to shoot Mustafa but Ali saved his life. Unfortunately the bullet struck Ali's arm which was bleeding. Ali with the encouragement of Mustafa escaped and began running as fast as he could. As a consequence Mustafa had been imprisoned because Charles accused him and Ali of trying to kill him and escape, and he shot Ali in self-defense.

Ardalan uses symbolism in the text of the novel. The colors, typically associated with the roses in his plant nursery represent the beauty of his beloved Mary and his love to her, especially the red color. The author emphasizes the significance of colors when Ali mentions that the colors "portray a message of appreciation for life." (p.20) Another symbol is the golden pendant that Ali gave to Mary. Ali made a jeweler create a special locket that he designed himself with a pair of green stones resembling eyes, fashioned in a manner that represent the color of Mary's eyes. Other important symbols in the novel are the books because they symbolize the cultural heritage and the keys for knowledge, success and even survival. On the significance of books, Ardalan asserted that "Books are

an escape to another world, books are a source of infinite knowledge. It combines history, culture, science and dreams, and for *The Gardener of Baghdad* love and hope.”(A. Ardalan, personal communication, September 2,2023)

Technically, Ardalan uses the third-person omniscient point of view to create complicated situations in which the characters’ intimate feelings are shown. The narrator has omniscient knowledge of the thoughts and emotions of all the individuals depicted in the story. The narrative is presented from the point of view of many characters, as conveyed by the narrator including Ali and Mustafa. Ardalan uses this point of view to create mystery in the story, give insight to the characters’ minds and make the readers sympathize with them. The author switches between the third –person perspective and the first-person perspective by telling the second story narrated by Ali and Mustafa.

Conclusions

The paper explores the role of love ,friendship ,care and kindness in helping people go through the hard times during wars and conflicts. Much ink has been spilt on the destruction and devastation of war, but little is shown about the human side of people during wartime. The narrative analyzed in this paper depicts the characters’ suffering, oppression and struggle for survival. The main characters are often dealing with tragedies of losing their loved ones, home or even their past. The study concludes that war which exists out of hatred and animosity cannot be masked only by love and compassion. In the novels under study ,there are many scenes on love, identity, and friendship which emphasize the importance of these topics. In *The Gardener of Baghdad*, love flourishes amidst the chaos and the conflicts inside the country. Ali was a ‘man of roses’ whose main concern ,like Adnan ,to live peacefully. Because of his love story with a British woman ,he had to suffer the cruelty of the society and leave his beloved city ,Baghdad, escaping the Iraqi and British authorities. Ali and Mary insisted on defying their own societies and getting married in spite of all the differences in religion ,culture and language. Ali’s decision to cross the borders that Mr. Radhi told him about led him to his tragic destiny. For him and Mary, love was an achievement ,yet a short living happiness. Ali, by writing his memoir to his little daughter could immortalize his wonderful love story with its sweet and bitter moments. Thanks to Adnan who found the memoir and insisted to find the real heroes of the story and find out the destiny of Ali. He eventually had the chance to meet Mary ,her daughter and Mustafa .

The study concludes that wars and conflicts not just impacted the lives of the characters but also shattered and destroyed them mentally and physically. The study proves that through love and kindness ,some characters could survive their dreadful world and war’s devastation. The final conclusion the study makes is that in spite of all the obstacles and difficulties, love can conquer.

Recommendations

The research for the role of love during wartime in literature could be continued in different directions like compiling the literary works and writing an anthology on ‘love and war in modern fiction’. It would be an amazing achievement to translate *The Gardener of Baghdad* into Arabic. The theme of love and war can be analyzed further in other Arabic and Western fiction comparatively to ensure the diversity of cultures. For future studies, the researcher recommends different topics like ‘ War in the City of Peace; Baghdad’ or ‘Ali: A Story of Survival’.

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