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Trauma and Identity; Traumatic Otherness in Gharbi Mustafa's "*What Comes with the Dust*"

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Abstract

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The paper explores Gharbi Mustafa's novel, *What Comes with the Dust* (2018), which portrays the status of Kurdish Yezidis who were targeted as a religious minority. The text reflects on the social and political life in the disputed Kurdistan territories that have been previously Arabized let alone political attempts to separate them from the Kurds. They have faced many operations from the surrounding entities and were always treated as others; devalued and marginalized people. Their villages, and history were targeted in addition to denying their political, religious, and cultural rights. The suffering of the Yezidis, more specifically the female characters, is to a great degree a traumatic experience where they feel disvalued and marginalized. The novel showcases the regressive, radical, inhumane treatment the Yezidi female characters faced under ISIS and by people under ISIS. The Kurdish Yezidis, as a religious minority were left unprotected after the Iraqi army's destruction in the disputed territories. This resulted in distrust and led to thousands of casualties, the enslavement of women and children, the mass murder of the males, and the destruction of their houses. The novel portrays characters that were stuck in a harsh reality as they were targeted due to their religious and ethnic identities in post-colonial Middle East. The novel will be analyzed through postcolonial otherness and trauma theories to find out how such experienced affected their identities.



About the Journal

Zanco Journal of Humanity Sciences (ZJHS) is an international, multi-disciplinary, peer-reviewed, double-blind and open-access journal that enhances research in all fields of basic and applied sciences through the publication of high-quality articles that describe significant and novel works; and advance knowledge in a diversity of scientific fields. <https://zancojournal.su.edu.krd/index.php/JAHS/about>

1. Introduction

1.1 Postcolonialism, Colonial Effects, and Kurdish Otherness: A Postcolonial Consciousness:

The phrase "postcolonial" relates to the works published during and after colonialism and the period when the European colonial empires ended in the mid-twentieth century. Still, its influence is vivid in colonially established or crafted nation-states that were formed without consideration for the cultural and historical backgrounds of the people forced into such unions. As country after country attained independence from the colonizing powers, the deconstruction of colonial control structures began in earnest in the late 1950s and reached its zenith in the 1960s; a momentous historical epoch. One argument for using the term "post-colonial" could be relevant to the people who reside in the post-colonial world and still pursued decolonization. (Childs and Williams, 1997, p. 1). Colonial empires crafted nation-states or ethnocentric regimes in the image of the colonial powers with little concern for ethnic minorities. As a result, after post-colonization they felt once more colonized by the ethnocentric majority who ruled the nation-states. Pamir, 1997, p. 4).

The status of the Kurds and other minorities within nation-states reflects the complexities of the post-colonial world that are and still as problematic as colonialism itself. Debatably, the reality of the new nation-states created by colonialism, in a humpy-dumpty nature also created never-ending conflicts turning ethnic groups against each other. The regimes like Iraq became habitable zones for conflict and discrimination against minorities, as argued by Researcher Laura Robson:

The end of the 1948 war marked a new era across the Mashriq in which postcolonial actors from Israel to Iraq to Syria consolidated their gains through the creation of forms of state rule centered on violence, increasingly directed against internal enemies... they all became ethnically and communally defined nations in which postcolonial administrations enforced boundaries of citizenship and political belonging through the deliberate deployment of state violence against particular communities—defined both ethnically and politically—within their borders. (Robson, 2020).

Thus, one can argue that, like Iraq, many of the post-colonial states ruled over ethnic minorities and failed to facilitate tolerant conditions, instead they practiced ethnocentric practices that resulted in peoples' antagonism and despair.

Postcolonialism, as a critical theory, analyzes the everlasting effects of colonialism on societies that were once colonized. The consequences of colonialism within the newly carved states jeopardized the indigenous Kurds, Kashmiris, and Baluchis. In postcolonialism, understanding and addressing these effects are crucial to promoting social justice, achieving decolonization, and fostering genuine development in formerly colonized nations. This involves challenging dominant narratives, supporting cultural revitalization, promoting unbiased economic practices, and empowering marginalized communities to reclaim their identities and existence. While colonialism focuses on the self-identified glories of the empires and how they have shaped the history of many regions, postcolonialism focuses on the aftermath of colonial rule and the impact it continues to have on the social, political, cultural, and economic structures of formerly colonized societies. (Burney, 2012, pp. 173-175).

Ania Loomba in *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (2015), explores the historical context of colonialism and its ongoing effects on culture, politics, and identity in postcolonial societies. She investigates the complexities of postcolonial identities, literature, and social structures. (Loomba, 2015, pp. 16-20). On the other hand, Neil Lazarus, another influential figure in postcolonial studies, has written extensively on the subject, with his leading work *The Postcolonial Unconscious* (2011). The term "postcolonial unconscious" refers to the psychological legacies of colonialism that make people either blind or unaware of their issues. To Neil Lazarus and others, the concept and rhetoric are more vivid within the third-world countries that are not part of the capitalist or socialist second world. The 'consciousness' in the third world could be due to social class conflict, which is arguably, furthered by the effects of colonialism or ethno-centric postcolonial regimes that treat citizens based on ethnicity and class. (Lazarus in Lorre, 2011, pp. 103-107).

1.2 Postcolonial Identity and Consciousness

During colonialism, consciousness and self-awareness developed toward the concept that is known as "postcolonial consciousness." This occurred in various fields and concerns not only in literature, including literature, but also in understanding the historical experience of colonized societies and their ongoing struggle to define the issue of identity formation and claim their ability to act in a world shaped by colonialism. Later the concept of postcolonial consciousness or postcolonial awareness emerged as part of a broader field of postcolonial studies that gained prominence in the late 20th century. Several scholars contributed to the development of postcolonial consciousness. The psychiatrist, philosopher, and revolutionary, Frantz Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), explored the psychological and sociopolitical effects of colonialism on both colonizers and colonized peoples. Fanon focused on intricate issue such as the issue of identity, alienation and otherness, and prejudices that affect the colonized people. On the other hand, Said, especially in *Orientalism*, criticized the West's perception of the East and its people. His work is foundational in the postcolonial studies critiquing the generalized stereotypes of the East that were often described as subjective, emotional, and exotic. (Said, 2003).

Postcolonial consciousness led to further awareness of colonialism. Another aspect of postcolonialism is the decolonization of the mind as discussed in detail by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o in his book *Decolonising the Mind* (1986), which is part of a process that involves challenging colonial ideologies and thought patterns that have been internalized by the colonized and seeking to reclaim and reaffirm their own cultural identities. Many postcolonial civilizations are the result of complex interactions between multiple cultures, they embrace diversity and oppose essentialist notions of identity being both natural and inherited. (Rana, 2021, pp. 45-51).

2. Literature Review

The novel has been published twice the last version stands as *What Comes with the Dust*, while the previous version was *What Comes with the Dust, Goes with the Wind*. In *What Comes with the Dust* (2018) otherness is either nationalistic or religious, constructed due to trauma and taking a stance against the center or culture as Kurdish writers defend their culture through literature. There is not much research and papers on the novel, as it is new and yet to be discovered, *What Comes with the Dust* portrays characters that feel alienated within their homeland, mistreated, and above all, let down by the system and government. The labels often imposed upon them could be wild mountainous ones, wild Turks, Jinns, other Persians, nomads, or immigrant Indians. This is the extent to which their very existence is an unnecessary burden on the nationalist states or ethnocentric regimes of the Middle East. This resonates with the political scholar and Kurdologist Michael Gunter who argues that cultural identity is developing apart from the political identity or Kurdishness, striving for cultural rights without the involvement or being led by the political elite or parties. The reactive form is practiced both through denial of citizenship or accepting the exclusion, which means making peace with oneself and showcasing otherness. (Gunter, 2016, pp. 16-21).

MA paper titled *Identity Enactment in 'What Comes with the Dust, Goes with the Wind'* (2022) is an attempt to focus on the representation of Identity. The researcher has not been explicit in portraying the socio-political dynamics of the place where the research is published. The research fails to critically and fairly label the category of the novel, being a Kurdish novel portraying the issues of the ethnic and religious minority due to both colonial and post-colonial factors. The research could have further focused on traits of identity, Kurdishness, otherness, and female-ness amid chaotic conditions that have created such formation of identity.

In a paper titled "*Principles of Resistance in Gharbi Mustafa's What Comes with the Dust, Goes with the Wind*," (2021) Khorsheed Mohammed Ahmed, Hishryar Ameen, Kawyar Ahmed, focus on an aspect of the novel, which is resistance. Their thematic approach relies on the characters and writer's means of resistance in a fragile condition. The researchers have tackled the characters' self-regulatory resisting personal power and the will to survive. The paper needs to further focus on the interpersonal and collective dynamo of resistance and perhaps focus on the consequences of the

atrocities Yezidi Kurds faced under ISIS or ISIL.

In this paper, the focus is on the traits of identity, Kurdishness, and Yezidiness of the characters that interplay as complementary rather than as a crisis. The characters portrayed in the novel show a strong will for freedom, best celebrated on home soil, Kurdistan. The characters also feel disappointed in the Iraqi government and the Arab neighbors who turned against them the moment ISIS attacked. Like many other novels, let alone Kurdish Yezidi survival stories, the characters turn to their mountains, as the only protectors and friends for the Kurds whether Yezidi or Kurds.

3. Otherness and the Kurds

The term "otherness" refers to the experience of being different or "other." It is a way of describing the state of being marginalized or excluded from society because of one's social and cultural uniqueness. The term "Other," on the other hand, refers to someone different from the norm or the majority. It is a way of describing characters who perceive themselves or are perceived as outsiders and who struggle to fit in society due to their differences. Thus, "othering" is the process of creating a sense of difference between oneself and others. This reflects the way people or individuals self-identify as different from others. Likewise, otherness forms when an individual or group feels marginalized. (Dimitrijevska-Jankulovska & Denkovska, 2023, pp. 47-50).

Otherness can also be through the ways of spotting characters' different experiences and behaviors that differ from the majority. Such differences result in their exclusion and may even lead to conflict as reflected in many literary masterpieces. In Toni Morrison's *The Blue Eyes* (1970), Pecola, a main character is othered merely because of the shade of skin color. This becomes Pecola's identity throughout the novel in relationships with others. Otherness can also be seen with the issues of power and privilege, as in Joseph Conrad's novel *Heart of Darkness* (1899), which uses the character of Kurtz to explore how colonialism and imperialism can lead to the othering of entire cultures and societies. In some ways, Morrison's works portray a familiar image resembling the Kurdish images apparent in *What Comes with the Dust* (2018) as the characters accept otherness imposed upon them through religious, reactive, and ethnic sense of identity and nationalism.

Colonialism is the physical dominance of one group of people over another. Dobie uncovers the influences of colonialism on certain people and geographies that have been invaded by a colonizer (Dobie, 2012). Following such dominance postcolonialism emerges as a response. (Ashcroft, et al., 2002, p. 168). Many theorists and critics are and have conceptualized ideas about othering and otherness within postcolonial discourse, including Edward Said, Homi K Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Said's *Orientalism* (1978) and *Culture Imperialism* (1993), Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994), and Spivak's essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1988). Said's work examines how Western culture has constructed an image of the "Orient" that has been used to justify colonialism and imperialism.

Kurds have been the victims of two different colonialisms: the Orient and the Occident. Kurds similar to many other ethnic minorities have been colonized like many other ethnic minorities by both the Ottoman and Safavid empires and then by Western colonialism, namely the United Kingdom and France. Additionally, let alone the neo-colonial regimes, of Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, that have prolonged colonial practices acquired from both of the colonialisms (Eliassi, 2013). In *Orientalism* (2003), Said provides many examples of how literature embodies otherness. One of his key arguments is that many Western writers have created fictionalized versions of non-Western cultures that are based on stereotypes and assumptions, rather than on an objective and realistic understanding of those cultures. He states that these representations of othering and otherness can be harmful. Likewise, the Kurds have been subject to such misrepresentation from the West and East as well. (Azeez, 2023). Said argues that Western representations of non-Western cultures have created a sense of otherness and they have perpetuated toxic stereotypes and assumptions. (Said, 2003, pp. 49-55).

Gayatri Spivak focuses on the concept of "subalternity," which refers to how marginalized people and groups are excluded from the dominant discourse of Western culture. It is apparent that only integration and hybridity or cultural assimilation, which I call 'the cultural meltdown' of the

colonized/invaded will pave the way for such integration into the culture of the ruling or dominant group. Such problematic integration into the culture of the Hostile is often considered degrading and downgrading from the perspective of the view of the ruled who assimilate into the culture of the ruling and develop hybridity in their tone of otherness. Said did not pay enough attention to the agency of people in the "Orient" themselves, and, for example, how the Ottoman and Safavid empires had a complex relationship with the Kurdish people, and this relationship was characterized by a certain amount of alienation and othering. Debatably, these oriental empires instigated many semi-colonial or even worse practices in dealing with the ruled in terms of marginalization or cultural denial.

Moreover, the Turkish Kurdologist and Theorist, Ismail Beşikçi argues that the Kurds are an illustration of an internal colony within Iraq's wider society. In *International Colony Kurdistan* (2004), Beşikçi offers a foundation for comprehending the methods used to subjugate minorities within a broader society. Even now, the Kurdistan region is referred to as the other Iraq. So, it is not only the people that have constructed a unique but othered identity, it is also their geography that is seen quite differently by outsider observers.

Otherness varies from one region to another in the way ethnic groups or political nations of majorities and minorities navigate their identity. Debatably, otherness is not only related to how people from a different ethnic group are perceived but also to the way the 'othered' people perceive themselves based on or influenced by the perception of the dominant ethnic group (Orchi, 2009, pp. 8-9). The Kurds have been subject to forced identity within the modern nation-states led by ethnic majorities of Persians, Turks, and Arabs. This has been far worse for the Kurdish religious component like the Kurdish Yezidis, whose ethnic and religious identity resulted in their double oppression as seen in Gharbi Mustafa's *What Comes with the Dust* (2018).

4. Identity in the Shadow of Trauma

The concept of "trauma" has become part of the postcolonial theory and criticism as a means to analyze and explore the consequences of colonialism. Clinically, trauma is any unbearable incident or situation that leaves humans in a sort of fear that could last for a long time and it can also pass on to the next generation. It could be the outcome of general phobias, a state of helplessness, constant fear due to threats, or surviving a traumatic accident. Such traumatic experiences or phobias leave people traumatized (Shaffer, 2000, pp. 164-165). Most of the credit goes to Sigmund Freud for popularizing the idea of psychological trauma in the early 20th century. Freud's work on trauma and the unconscious mind helped to establish the idea that traumatic experiences could have a profound impact on the psyche and that these experiences could be overcome through expression and therapy (Mandal & Singh, 2022, pp. 10257-10260).

According to Berman, Montgomery, and Ratner (2020), trauma can change how identity develops. Trauma from the past or the present can affect identity and how it is manifested in the traumatized people. To distinguish whether a traumatic experience leads to posttraumatic stress disorder or posttraumatic growth, identity can also be a lens through which trauma is seen and processed. (Berman, et al., 2020, p. 1). Additionally, psychoanalyst Brenner (2017) argues that identity development happens throughout life. Identity is disrupted by trauma during development as survival takes precedence over normal self-development. Identity includes a sense of self as good enough, emotional and intellectual integration, basic awareness of emotional state, the feeling of security and connectedness as an individual, and even the basic experience of one's true self. Besides, an environment marked by fear and neglect, for example, causes different modifications of brain circuits than a safe environment, early trauma modifies the brain's developmental trajectory (Brenner, 2017).

Writers like Toni Morrison and Art Spiegelman in addition to Kurdish writers, namely, Kai Bahar, Ava Homa, Zaid Brifkani, Gharbi Mustafa, and others have written on trauma. According to Blaeve (2008), a central claim of contemporary literary trauma theory asserts that trauma creates a mute fear that divides or destroys identity in the simplest form. As far as trauma theory is concerned, trauma is reshaped by some elements, including the interplay that occurs between language,

experience, memory, and place. Arguably, social, cultural, and historical encounters influence an individual and the construction of his or her identity. Individuals exposed to more than one social, historic, or cultural event are likely to develop a form of 'other-ed' identity that is subtle or alien to one's larger society. (Balaev, 2008, pp. 149-166). Theoretically, Edward Said has been very explicit in his criticism of Western colonialism and imperialism, which has created a sense of trauma among the occupied, as they have been subjected to violence, exploitation, and cultural erasure. This trauma is closely related to the experience of "otherness," due to different ethnic and religious identities. (Said, 2003, pp. 53-54).

In brief, trauma whether acute residing from a single incident, chronic trauma is repeated and prolonged such as violence or abuse; or last but not least, complex trauma which involves exposure to multiple traumatic events, determines one's identity. The second and the third types are the most apparent forms of trauma visible in characters in the novels to be discussed below. Characters repeatedly suffer from traumatic experiences of torture, neglect, mobilization, massacre, and rape. One could argue that it is not only colonialism that alters identity towards otherness but there are other contributors of otherness such as globalization and multiculturalism that recognize no border or authority, due to the free flow of information and technologically asserted communication mediums.

5. Trauma and Identity; Traumatic Otherness in Gharbi Mustafa's *What Comes with the Dust*

The ending of ISIS has been as problematic, if not worse, than their rise as a radical Islamist group that sought to establish itself as a major khalifate in the region. ISIS targeted almost all of the components of Iraq. Still, they were keener to force non-Muslims into following their version of Islam, enslaving their females and rewriting their history and presence. ISIS had a khalifate complex and wanted to revive the ancient khalifate, force its people to Muslims, alter their culture and more problematically enslave their women as sex slaves, many of whom have been forced into radicalization. (Byman, 2015). Nazo, a female sex slave survivor, is treated as an infidel, and cannot fulfill her dreams after ISIS atrocities. The traumatic experience of the character, Nazo, means coquettishness or coquetry, a name given to daughters.

Gharbi Mustafa's *What Comes with the Dust* (2018) showcases various issues related to the Kurdish Yazidi community on individual and communal levels. The characters feel devalued, displaced, and othered. The main character, Nazo, feels hopeless, disfranchised, devalued, and marginalized. After being captured by the ISIS group, she is mistreated, bought and sold, and raped by ISIS members. The characters, including Nazo, feel othered in the novel amid the war and conflict that the Yazidi community underwent in addition to both tragic mass killings and their exodus. Nazo, as an individual character and as a microcosmic sample of the whole female Yazidi Kurds, suffers due to various layers of oppression including religious, ethnic, and gender as part of the minority in an unfriendly society.

Additionally, the main character struggles to formulate a central identity due to how others identify them; others who are in power in almost all of the domains of Iraqi society. The text mainly focuses on Nazo's journey; however, it also showcases the collective identities of the Yazidi Kurds. Otherness and otheredness in Mustafa's *Comes with the Wind* are showcased through the perception and lens of the Kurdish Yazidis who feel othered and considered different by the majority. Throughout the text, the complexities of otherness, challenges, and atrocities are highlighted of Yazidis who are yet perceived as unwelcomed 'others'. The novel is the tragic story of a female representing many others under the influence of power dynamics in post-colonial Iraq where minorities, both ethnic and religious, suffer due to policies of exclusion, issues of representation, rejected traditions, and rejected history.

What Comes with the Wind focuses on a family and their struggles during and after ISIS. Nazo and her family face various challenges and hardships to the extent to which Nazo suffers from a sense of loss due to the conflict, which all affect their sense of self, identity, and otherness. Despite a sort of conclusion, the story does not end with much hope. The traumatic experiences that shaped their sense of self and others around them continue to haunt them for a longer time, maybe forever.

The Yazidi Kurds, like the Kurds of other faiths, always show readiness for new beginnings for a better future, but unfortunately, they are often disillusioned by the reality. Nazo is overwhelmed because of the challenges that she faces that make her make up her mind about committing suicide at the beginning of the story. Such struggles like marginalization and alienation made her stronger and finds mechanisms to overcome the traumatic experiences that shaped her identity. At the end of the story, she shows up as a determined and bold character to learn from the past and lives life to the fullest accepting who she is. This implies Nazo like many other survived female Yazidi Kurds embraced their survivor and aimed for a better future either with the surviving family members or with the new families they became part of. The novel is a bold attempt to cover the atrocities hardships, and torture the Kurdish Yazidis, more specifically females, faced both during and post-ISIS. The text also gives away certain messages to other survivors, individuals to learn from such tragic incidents to learn how to cope with their traumas and marginalization.

At the beginning of the novel, Nazo, a bride, is normally supposed to be celebrating marriage, but instead closes the door on herself and wants to set herself on fire in the bathroom. She is sidelined by her family and society as is forced into an arranged marriage, marrying someone she does not love, then just falls off her spirit and anguish completely socked by indecisiveness shade of societal norms and traditions. The following quotation from the beginning of the novel shows exactly that state of mind:

TODAY IS Nazo Heydo's wedding day, and today she will set herself on fire. Wearing her white gown, Nazo walks toward the bathroom door. In her right hand, she clutches the handle of a kerosene jerry can. Once inside, she turns and locks the door. A cold wind whistles through the broken panes of the small window. Her body shivers as she leans against the blue tile of the wall. She removes her veil and throws it on the floor. Warm tears streak her cheeks as she raises the heavy jerry can over her head. In shallow breaths, the odor of the kerosene fills her nostrils with the fumes of despair and anguish. She pours it over herself until she is soaked in it. The kerosene washes away the layers of her caked-on makeup, leaving her face pale and sheer. (Mustafa, 2018, p. 1).

As seen above, Nazo is completely helpless and hopeless but is yet determined to set herself on fire to establish her position as a solid and decisive person. Here she is convinced that her life is already a waste. This is a poignant moment as Nazo tries to take her life on her wedding day, a scene tragic and illogical, however, it is the byproduct of marginalization and a sense of otherness both internally and externally due to societal expectations. This act of self-sacrifice to Nazo is an act of retaliation against the imposed constraints of society. Arguably, it showcases a way of asserting her individuality and independence through self-sacrifice. Besides, this can also be seen as an act of rejection of a man and a whole society that prevents her from the most important life decision; marriage. Nazo was not listened to or consulted about this wrong personal life decision and she could not think rationally because of that. It is important to consider how otherness, and alienation due to marginalization can lead to worse consequences. This often takes place within both patriarchal and war-torn and third-world post-colonial countries where law and legislation fall short of protecting the vulnerable. In the above quotation, otherness is shown through her quest to reclaim her agency and to assert her individuality against the oppressive traditional norms and familial pressures; the factors that have led Nazo to even consider self-sacrifice.

Another incident that is related to Nazo's sense of otherness is related to environmental and societal determiners and factors that lead to that feeling. The way the text describes how the dust resembles "blood reign," a hunting scenery that has covered the sky might metaphorically mean that the whole society has been controlled and that the environment is inhospitable:

The windblown dust of the Arabian Desert fell like a blood rain from the sky of the Shingal region. The sun struggled to break through, but the cloak of dust choked its golden beams to a pale red all across the horizon. Moments later, a cloud of dust splattered into the house and red dirt shrouded the freshly painted walls. By midafternoon the village had become a

ghost town. Everyone took a siesta to escape the August heat. Swinging the handle of her bucket, Nazo hummed a Kurdish folk song as she walked up the rocky dirt track. (p. 4)

The quote shows two binary oppositions at least from the domain perception of Nazo as the Arabian dust controls the territory, which metaphorically translates as ISIS and its attacks on the Yazidi Kurds. The sound of the Kurdish traditional songs in the background of the events, on one hand, depicts her sense of self, and on the other, her sense of otherness, as the ISIS fanatics invade Shingal and disrupt their lives. With the dust comes ISIS, and the scenery of the bloodbath from the killings (blood rain), and displacement showcases how struggling the character Nazo and her family are. As seen above, there is a significant contrast between the Kurdish music in the background and the dusty ISIS that comes from the Arab-stan to completely change the reality into their version. This quotation resonates with Edward Said's argument within and post-colonial otherness due to colonialism. In *Orientalism* (2003), he examines how the culture of the East is seen as a degenerated and backward culture and its people as exotic and sentimental beings who lack a rational way of thinking. Additionally, the depiction of the Arabian dessert signifies the cultural and geographical differences that the Yazidi Kurdish characters have to deal with and suffer because of. The interplay of such challenges faced by Nazo and other characters reflects the power dynamics and stereotypes perpetuated by the invading ISIS fighters.

Nazo as a non-Muslim girl tries to seek sanctuary in Mosul. A place where all of the people including those who befriended the Yazidi Kurds have now turned against them and the market for the young girls is blooming. In the following quotation, one can observe when Nazo asks an old Arab man for protection for the night and reminds him to follow the tradition of protecting those who seek refuge in their domicile. However, the old man's refusal portrays the challenges, and hardships the othered Yazidi Kurdish girl faced and how such troubled times even changed the positive long-standing traditions of people.

"I beg you, sir, I need shelter for the night."

"Are you a non-Muslim?" he asked.

"Yes," Nazo admitted in a desperate voice.

"Move along, woman. I don't want any trouble." "Please, sir, I implore you, to give sanctuary and hospitality to a stranded woman as is the Arabian tradition." The old man shook his head from side to side. "A tradition once, perhaps, but not anymore."

"You're not going to let me in?"

"No," he replied firmly. (p. 54-55)

The interaction between Nazo and the old man is the clearest form of otherness the female character feels. It can be noticed here that Nazo is denied protection because she is a non-Muslim woman, which shows the societal division and how the 'other' is mistreated. This encounter shows how certain individuals in such a context are excluded from dominant cultural or religious norms. Such excluded people, like Nazo, are completely marginalized and this results in further division and decay of societal harmony and belonging to a single nation-state that fails to protect them. This may also indicate that the nation-state of Iraq led by the Arabs needs to establish a balanced relationship between different ethnic groups and religious faith followers through a constitution and laws that can protect the vulnerable. The above quote also unveils the tragic reality of the Yazidi Kurds and more specifically a female individual who is denied shelter for a single night, which reflects her utmost vulnerability as the othered.

Besides, the old Man's refusal is motivated by fear in addition to the changes and the power dynamics and the cultural landscape of ISIS that has further incited prejudices, exclusion, and rejection of the 'other'. This scenario resonates with Edward Said's theory on the 'other' where the dominant group perceives the 'other' as both inferior and exotic and stereotypes them based on either cultural or religious identities. This also resonates with Franz Fanon's exploration of colonialism as an invading power and how it changes power dynamics and reconstructs power relations between different components of the same society. This is the reason why Nazo accepts her otherness more than any other incident in the story. Moreover, this is also related to the psychology of the other as discussed in his masterpieces *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), and *The*

Wretched of the Earth (1961) where he sheds light on how the dominant culture can marginalize the other based on either race, faith, or identity. Fanon also discusses the role of religion and how it functions to construct and force a central identity for a group by the ruling group as an attempt to impose their own form or religious culture upon others; once a group rejects it, they are marginalized and their termination becomes necessary to establish god's will, as believed, and eradicate the other. This brings forth the equation of exclusion and inclusion in a society once harmonious. Arguably what was more tragic for the Yazidi Kurds is that their neighbors and friends turned against them leaving them in a complete state of disbelief and disappointment.

Nazo is perceived by the people who lived under ISIS' domination as an object to be bought and sold. The protagonist is materialized and more critically dehumanized. The following quote demonstrates how Nazo is stripped of her autonomy and her identity is reduced to an othered person who can be exploited and violated like a material.

The old man shouted at his son, "Are you out of your mind? Do you want my head impaled on a post in the city center tomorrow?"

"I would love to see that," the old woman replied.

The young man drew closer to the older one and whispered in his ears. "Father, a *sabiya*¹ means money." (p. 59-61)

The above conversation among the three Arab family members on the new Yazidi *Sabiya*, which means a slave girl, is problematic in the sense that the girl is completely dehumanized and objectified. Nazo is seen once as a gift and another time quarreled upon on whether she is the property of the father or the son. The conversation among the three family members appears to be on a downgraded subject not much better than cattle.

The conversation also portrays the complicated dynamics of power identity and Society will norms based on new hierarchies of power. There are gender dynamics in addition to historical interpretations of religious texts. The attitudes of the dominant group toward the dominated are characterized by exclusion, manipulation, and denial of agency for the female character, Nazo. She is prejudiced against based on both cultural prejudices and historical legacies. She is perceived as inferior and the dialogue also unveils a moment of cultural negotiation and struggle due to power; additional norms and roles are protested against. There's also the potential of the third space in shaping individuals' agency and resistance within this context. Nazo in the dialogue has no chance of role as if she did exist. The use of the word '*Sabiya*' exactly can stand for other or otherness as she is completely marginalized due to her ethnic and religious identity and is completely devalued and sold to ISIS members. This also shows the horrific practice of exploiting individuals for temporary benefits where human values are put aside once again Nazo is stripped of her independence.

Nazo undergoes two different types of otherness, or it could be said that she is 'othered' at two different times, one by ISIS, and one more time by her people as she's mistaken for being ISIS before she is rescued. After some time, Nazo spent forcibly with the ISIS so-called jihadists, she was taken somewhere else, however, the caravan was interrupted by the Kurdish forces and was firstly mistaken for being ISIS:

Before the truck came to a halt, I jumped out the door, rolled on the ground, and landed on my belly. "The fighters approached, shouting, 'It's an ISIS suicide attack.' " "I'm a Yazidi Kurd! Don't shoot! Don't shoot!" I shouted back. "A few of the women lifted me from the ground. They searched me for explosives while the men headed to the truck and raised the hood in search of anything suspicious. "The man in charge picked up the assault rifle from the seat and walked toward me while I guzzled water from a bottle one of the women had given me. 'A Yazidi woman with a gun in an ISIS truck? What's your story?' (p. 48-49).

The scene highlights both fear and confusion in a condition where identities can be easily confused and lives could be at risk. When the character shouts that she is a Yazidi Kurd clarifies that this matters for her survival in these circumstances. Later on, she is checked out to find out whether she

¹ Sabaya is an Arabic word that means captive women. The term was for the Kurdish Yazidi women taken as slaves by ISIS. (Kiang, 2021)

carries any explosives or detonators, but found clean. The quotation also shows the harsh reality someone othered like Nazo faced during such hardships of war-torn Shingal. There are two forms of otherness in the quotation: one form of otherness is while being a captive with ISIS, and the other is when liberated by the Kurdish armed groups when she self-identifies as both Yazidi and Kurdish. This highlights her hybrid identity and otherness coinciding with the ideas of Edward Said specifically in *Orientalism*. The protagonist experiences mistaken identity as an ISIS attacker unless she has to identify herself as a Yazidi Kurd, which also reflects the issue of misrepresentation and stereotyping, let alone the struggle because of marginalization as the 'other,' who is a female, a Yazidi, and A Kurd at the same time. The quote resonates with Homi K. Bhabha's theory of hybridity as Nazo navigates her identities in this context. In *The Location of Culture* (2004), Bhabha discusses the fluidity of identity is discussed due to socialization and cultural interactions. This also implies that she is against being confined to a singular stereotypical category and thus prefers to self-identify as both a Yazidi to define her religious identity and as a Kurd to identify her ethnicity. The interplay of these two identities that are othered by the dominant group shows the fluidity of identity despite being in this post-war reality in postcolonial Iraq.

Moreover, Nazo is being sold another time for not being a virgin this time, along with her friend Soleen. As she spends a short time with two other enslaved females Soleen and Firmesk, there is a moment of happiness, however, they were not destined to remain beside each other and are sold to different 'owners' one more time as merchandise as in this dialogue between two slave delivery truckmen "Don't mess too much with the merchandise; I don't want any trouble getting paid!" (pp. 97-98). This indicates yet again that the female Yazidi Kurdish characters are dealt with as a form of devalued women because of their ethnicity and religious faith. This resembles the colonial treatment of Africans during and after colonization, a practice critiqued and well-covered by Franz Fanon. Fanon emphasized the way humans are mistreated and stripped of their humanity. The buying and selling of the two reflect the dehumanization and objectification of two othered women within the enforcement of power dynamics.

Historically, Kurds have often been labeled as outsiders, others, Jinn, immigrants, or invaders. This has been widespread in Arabic and more specifically the Shiite doctrine. Margaret Khan in her book *Children of the Jinn: The Story of My Search for the Kurds and their Country* (2020) explores Kurdishness and Kurdistan to uncover the reasons behind such myths that label an othered ethnic nation as Jinn. She states that countries upon which Kurdistan is divided are afraid of the Kurds:

Like Solomon with his jinn, these governments are afraid of the Kurds, afraid of what they would do with a fair share of the proceeds from the oil that lies under Kurdistan, afraid of what they would demand if they knew how to read and write and were free to speak their own language and assert their right to be Kurds. (Margaret, 2020, pp. 58-59).

Likewise, ISIS who were predominately Arabs, as referred to in *What Comes with the Dust*, used such labels to downgrade the Kurds as subhuman or inhuman. The categorization coincides with the colonial rhetoric and how the supposedly superior Western is more evolved and incited by scientific racism. The quote below from the novel reiterates this labeling:

"Maybe it's the soul of my dead grandpa, who had a jinn friend."

"A jinn friend?" The girl laughed for the first time. "Yazidis are Kurds, and Kurds are children of jinn. You are descendants of King Solomon's jinn. I'd expect you all to be brothers and sisters of the jinn, not merely friends!" (p. 99).

Jinn is associated with supernatural entities that are fearful and traumatic, linking this label to the Kurdish Yazidis shows how othered the characters felt and were perceived by ISIS. King Solomon's Jinn who betrayed him and took virgins from Europe are believed to be the ancestors of the Kurds by mainstream Arabs. Such prejudices are fostered more during the conflicts. Ironically, in the following quotation, the ISIS leader's daughter talks to two Jinn, one Nazo and the other real Jinn whom Kurds are considered descendants of:

I'm not possessed by the jinn, as my father thinks. I only communicate with them. Those creatures were created out of the hot desert winds blowing on a smokeless fire. The whirlwinds that carry the dust turn into spinning pillars and cause the swift movement of the

jinn. (p. 117).

Now two females, one from the dominating and the other from the dominated or subordinated are othered and labeled to the mythical Jinn entities. As females, both have witnessed traumatic events that have become unstable, perhaps the Arab possessed by the Jinn has her own untold story as marginalized within her own patriarchal and radial household and society. Either way, being a female in a patriarchal society or under ISIS, is traumatic enough for the two females in two different ethnic and religious groups to feel othered, as seen above; one for being insane and one for being a slave.

As Nazo becomes friends with the daughter of the Egyptian ISIS leader, the two share their experiences and discuss how disappointed they are due to war and conflict. Their alliance reflects the oppression and dehumanized treatment they receive from the same people, ISIS, who devalue women and their position in society. The double oppression of the Egyptian female and the triple oppression of the Kurdish Yazidi female is because of the masculine power dynamics where women are objects of pleasure and housework. Such traumatic experiences that encourage the Arab females to consider migration through escaping and facing more danger and trauma along the way, reflect how difficult their lives have been and make them not think twice as females instead taking on a new journey to find some peace, as seen below:

“I won’t be here tomorrow,” Mirvat muttered one morning, as she sat up, eager for her tea and toast with marmalade. “You and me, Nazo, we’re getting the hell outta of here. No way am I gonna be some twisted trophy bride. I’ll be at the embassy in Ankara before my ol’ man can say scat. I’ll be back in Dover by my birthday, have a nice celebration with my friends.” (p. 131).

The above quotation also shows that two women from two completely different backgrounds team up to escape the Middle East, a traumatic place for women. The two, one othered due to her mental condition and the other due to Kurdishness, Yazidiness, and gender, ally to resist this dehumanized status where they are treated as commodities. This echoes Fanon’s insight on the characters who undergo difficult mental and psychological conditions due to the invasion and establishment of ISIS. This resembles the human condition in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952). Fanon critiques the effects of colonialism and how it affects stripe humans of their values and humanity.

Further, Nazo’s traumatic otherness continues throughout the novel. In another incident, she faces various obstacles, and what makes it worse is her gender identity or otherness. Nazo's three othered identities intersect due to her marginalized status. Due to the post-colonial reality, Nazo as a female Yazidi Kurd lives in a nation-state country that is now more sectarian than inclusive or civic. Besides, as an othered woman who experienced suicide trauma, forced marriage, rape, and enslavement, all of that show that she has been through many forms of marginalization. This new wave of oppression is the continuation of what they call 'Ferman', a Kurdish term to define atrocities they have historically suffered from that has superseded over 70 operations. The religious otherness has not only constructed Nazo's otherness. Still, it has also affected how she is perceived and treated by others from the dominant groups positioning her on the margins of the society or perhaps no place at all. In the following quotation, she feels how as a Kurdish female Yazidi feels about her identity, life, and position in the Middle East:

Nazo blanched. “How will the Turks treat a Yazidi Kurd like me? And the Brits won’t process my refugee papers for months ... if at all.”

“True,” Mirvat admitted before chewing in thought. “So where do you want to be?” (pp. 145-146).

As seen above, Nazo is traumatized by the Turks and their treatment of the other. Terror and fear have always overshadowed the experience of the Kurds with the Turks. As stated by Khan, Kurds have been outlawed and treated as wild Turks: The portion of Kurdish lands that fell to Turkey, the new republic headed by Ataturk, would never again be referred to as Kurdistan. The people would be called *Mountain Turks* (Kahn, 2020, pp. 58-59). Moreover, such experiences have dominated the collective thinking of the Kurds. Besides, Nazo remembers stories here and there about the Turks’

treatment of the Kurds. On the other hand, both ethnic and religious minorities have been labeled as external proxies and threats to identity, culture, and religion in Turkey. (Yilmaz & Albayrak, 2021).

Nazo's freedom came long after pain, victimhood, rape, and enslavement. Later, near the end of the novel, her pregnancy becomes more visible as the infant grows day by day. She suffers from all of the incidents of rape and the trauma may haunt her forever, but she refuses times and again to let go of the child that may not have anything to do with its existence. Many people, including within the Yazidi community wanted an abortion to redeem themselves or their daughters from ISIS, but Nazo rejects that:

One early morning, a local aid worker approached Nazo and asked if her pregnancy were increasing her burden, making it harder for her to cope with what had happened to her. "Though abortion is illegal in this region unless a doctor decides that giving birth to the child will threaten the life of the mother, I could offer you abortion pills, but it's too late, I guess. Most pregnant girls who return from ISIS slavery either take the pills or carry out an abortion themselves," said the woman. (p. 210).

This quote shows the problematic nature of society based on judgments and traditions as Nazo is advised to have an abortion. This reflects how vulnerable women can be as othered and marginalized members of society. Nazo is othered by another woman, a nurse, who thinks on her behalf and asks in the position of tradition. As Nazo rejects her suggestion and decides to keep the baby, the nurse is boggled and surprised at the same time. Arguably, both Nazo and the infant are othered here. The baby is seen as an outsider or child of rape and thus is believed by the nurse that it does not deserve to live. On the other hand, Nazo is seen as sinful, and perhaps, based on the nurse's thinking only an abortion may redeem her. Nazo activates her mother-infant resistance position and demands to be respected.

Last but not least, in an incident where ISIS members were surrounded, yet again they seemed to be persistent in their oppressive rhetoric and derogatory remarks. Despite their defeat, they were keen to erase the Yazidi Kurds, enslave them, or behead them:

...as they charged toward the house with their weapons ready, someone inside called, "We'll enslave and behead all of you worthless creatures!"

Rezan unleashed a burst of gunfire through the iron gate. "Come out, old rat! Come out if you're a real man!" she yelled.

"We'll drive you out from here into Hell!"

Soz replied, "We Yazidi Kurds have lived here for five thousand years! No one can drive us out!"

Soz and Omed snaked through the crossfire until they were in range to throw their hand grenades into the house's inner yard. They each took a grenade from their ammunition vests, then looked at each other. On Soz's third head nod, their two grenades flew over the wall into the yard. (pp. 188-189).

This shows that the ISIS fanatics have radicalized to an extent that even at their weakest point are keen to terminate the Kurds. This highlights the highest level of power dynamics and dehumanization of the radical group. The use of such rhetoric against the Kurds and Yazidi Kurds for that matter unveils the problematic agenda that has been around for centuries through the expansion of radical groups. On the other hand, the response of the Yazidi Kurds here is still reactive and showcases otherness. The Kurds, in reality, often deliver lectures on history to legitimize their existence on their indigenous land, Kurdistan. Here, the characters reject to be silenced, they shout back with words that define struggle and their otherness. This confrontation resonates with Fanon's analysis of power dynamics, and the shift of power dynamics within the context establishing and showing otherness and cultural struggle.

Conclusively, Gharbi Mustafa's *Comes with the Dust* showcases several women from different ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds. However, most of the events revolve around one central

character, Nazo, who is destined to undergo much pain due to her 'othered' ethnicity, culture, religion, and gender.

6. Conclusion:

In *What Comes with Dust*, Nazo the main character experiences otherness in several ways: one related to her gender role and expectations based on the traditions and how she tries to act against that. Another is related to her unique culture and mixed heritage that alienates her and her people from the rest of the people who do not share the same cultural traits, religion, and history. The third form of otherness is that she cannot make a balance between her desires and societal norms like belonging and acceptance in her cultural environment. She tried to challenge such traditional roles given to her and females where they were not allowed to express themselves freely. She is often seen as a rebellious character who questions such constructed traditional roles. She was often faced with great decisions one of two options which were either following personal choice or accepting the traditions imposed upon her because of the status quo, which she stands against. This results in her otherness or othered identity, an identity completely alienated within the established social structures. Other than otherness, the characters also experienced displacement and marginalization in a world characterized by oppression and segregation.

The novel also sheds light on non-Kurd females as well, who due to their marginalization align with the Kurdish Yazidi females like Nazo to seek a breakthrough. The unlikely friendship between Nazo and Mirvet and their interactions show mutual otherness and marginalization in the face of radicalism and oppression. The two feel isolated and outcast in the man's world. The work shifts attention to more complex issues minorities and marginalized communities suffer from in the Middle East especially issues like identity, identity crisis, otherness, survival, and marginalization.

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زەبری دەروونی و ناسنامە؛ ئەویدی بوون بەهۆی زەبری دەروونی لە پۆمانی ئەوەی لەگەڵ تۆزدا دیت ی غەری مستەفا

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پوختە:

ئەم توێژینەوێهە شیکاری پۆمانی ئەوەی لەگەڵ تۆزدا دیت (٢٠١٨) ی غەری مستەفا پیگە کورده ئیزدیەکان وەکو پیکهاتەیهکی ژمارەکه می ئایینی نیشان دەدات که کرانه ئامانج. دهقه که رهنگدانهوهی ژبانی کومه لایهتی و سیاسی ناوچه کیشه له سه ره کانی کوردستانه که پیشتر به عه ره ب کران، ئەمە وێرای هەولێ سیاسی بۆ جیاکردنەوێیان لە کورد. ئەوان پووبه پرووی چەندین فرمانی کۆشتن و قێکردنێان دراوه له لایەن قهواره کانی دەرووبەر و بەردهوام وەک ئەوانی دیکه مامه له یان له گەل کراوه؛ خەلکی بیماف و پەراویزخراو. ئەوان گوند و شارەکانیان کراونه ته ئامانج، میژوو و مافه سیاسی و ئایینی و کۆلتورییه کانیان رەتکراوه ته وه. ئازاری ئیزدییه کانی، به تابهت که سایه تیه ژنه کانی نیو رۆمانه که، تا رادهیه کی زۆر ئەزمونیکی کاره ساتیار و کۆستیاره، که ههست به بی به ها بوون و پەراویزخستن ده کهن. غەری مستەفا سروسیتی دواکه توو، و توندرو و نامرۆفانهی مامه له کردن له گەل کورده ئیزدییه کانی نیشان دەدات له رێگه ی که سایه تیه ژنه کانی له سه ره دهستی داعش و له لایەن کهسانی ژیر دهستی داعشه وه که پووبه پروویان بووه ته وه. کورده ئیزدییه کانی، وەک پیکهاتەیه کی ئایینی، دواي هه ره سه پنهانی سوپای عێراق له ناوچه جیناکۆکه کانی، بی پارێزراوی مانه وه. ئەمەش بێتمانەیی لیکه و ته وه و بووه هۆی ئەوهی هه زاران قوربانی و به کۆیله کردنی ژن و مندال و کۆشتنی به کومه لی نیره کانی و ویرانکردنی ماله کانیان رووبدات. رۆمانه که وینای کومه لیک که سایه تی کردوه له راستیه کی سه ختدا گیریان خواردوو وه ک چون به هۆی ناسنامه ی ئایینیانه وه له لایەن عوسمانیه کۆلۆنیالییه رۆژه لاتیه کانه وه کرانه ئامانج و وەک کورده کانی دیکه ش به هۆی زله یزه کۆلۆنیالییه ئەوروپیه کانی و به ریتانیا و فەرهنسا ئازاریان چەشتبووز رۆمانه که له روانگه ی پۆستکۆلۆنیالیزم و زه بری دەروونی پۆستکۆلۆنیالیزم شی ده کریته وه.

هوشه سه ره که ییه کانی: کورد، کوردبوون، که مینه کانی، ناسنامه، ئیزدی، پۆست کۆلۆنیالیزم

الصدمة النفسية والهوية؛ الآخريه بسبب الصدمة النفسية في رواية "ما يأتي مع الغبار" لغربي مصطفى

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المخلص:

یستکشف البحت رواية "ما يأتي مع الغبار" (٢٠١٨) لغربي مصطفى، التي يوضع وضع الأيزيديين الكورد الذين تم استهدافهم كأقلية عرقية ودينية. يعكس النص الحياة الاجتماعية والسياسية في المناطق الكوردية المتنازع عليها والتي تم تعريبها سابقاً، ناهيك عن المحاولات السياسية لفصلهما عن الكورد. لقد واجهوا العديد من العمليات من الجهات المحيطة وكانوا يعاملون دائماً كآخرين؛ الناس المحرومين والمهمشين. كما واجهوا عمليات تدمير استهدفت قراهم وتاريخهم، بالإضافة إلى حرمانهم من حقوقهم السياسية والدينية والثقافية. إن معاناة الإيزيديين، مع التركيز بشكل أكبر على الشخصيات النسائية، هي إلى حد كبير تجربة مأساوية ومؤلمة حيث يشعرون بالتقليل من القيمة والتهميش.. يعرض غربي مصطفى في روايته الطبيعة الرجعية والمتطرفة واللإنسانية للمعاملة التي واجهتها الشخصيات النسائية الإيزيدية في ظل داعش ومن قبل الناس في ظل حكم داعش. وقد تُرك الإيزيديون الكورد، كأقلية دينية، دون حماية بعد هزيمة الجيش العراقي في المناطق المتنازع عليها. وأدى ذلك إلى انعدام الثقة وسقوط آلاف الضحايا واستعباد النساء والأطفال والقتل الجماعي للذكور وتدمير منازلهم. يصور الرواية شخصيات عالقة في واقع قاس، حيث تم استهدافهم بسبب هويتهم الدينية من قبل على يد العثمانيين المستعمرين الشرقيين، وعانوا كغيرهم من الكورد بسبب القوى الاستعمارية الأوروبية وبريطانيا وفرنسا. سيتم تحليل الرواية من خلال نظريات الآخريه والصدمة ما بعد الاستعمارية لمعرفة كيف أثرت هذه التجربة على هوياتهم.

الكلمات الرئيسية: كورد، الهوية الكوردية، أقليات، هوية، ايزيدية، ما بعد الاستعمار